॥ नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः

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INDEX TO CONTENTS

PAGE

Adbhutananda, Memoirs of Swami (Lātu Maharaj)—Translation 33, 69, 97, 396, 438, 482, 534, 570, 621, 640
Alexander, The Philosophy of—*By S. Subhash Chandra* .. 525
Atman, The, Nature of the Self or—*Editorial* .. 594
Bagala in the Guise of Saraswati—*By M. P. Pandit* (A review article) .. 477
Beacon Light, He is still a—*By Swami Shraddhananda* .. 226
Bhagavad Gita, the Philosophy of—*By Vishwanath Prasad Varma* .. 466
Brahmananda, Swami—The Spiritual Son of Sri Ramakrishna—*Editorial* .. 494
Buddha, Gautama—*By Bhupendra Nath Sarkar* .. 73
Buddha, Message of the—*By Br. Atma Chaitanya* .. 104
Christ and Vedanta, Jesus—*By Swami Budhananda* .. 470
Conscious and the Unconscious, The—*By Swami Nityabodhananda* .. 92
Ecumenical Council—A Hindu view, A Vatican
—*By Swami Siddhinathananda* .. 645
EDITORIAL 2, 42, 82, 128, 330, 373, 413, 455, 494, 550, 594, 634
    Atman, Nature of the Self or The .. 594
    Brahmananda, Swami—The Spiritual Son of Sri Ramakrishna .. 494
    Maya, What is .. 413
    Prayer .. 330
    Ramakrishna the Practical Mystic .. 550
    Religion, Value of Practice in .. 373
    Scriptures and their Purpose .. 455
    Self-Abnegation .. 82
    Self-Effort and Self-Surrender .. 42
    Solitude in Religious Life, Significance of .. 2
    Symbols in Spiritual life, Significance of .. 634
    Vivekananda, An Exemplar of His Teachings .. 128
Education, Universal—*By Br. Vidya Chaitanya* .. 26
Great Equation, The—*By S. K. Gupta* 115, 402, 448, 484, 538, 573, 609
Hinduism Retarding India's National Growth? Is—*By Swami Budhananda* 112
Hinduism and Christianity teach the same things
—*By Rabindrakumar Siddhantasastree* .. 618
Holy Mother and Her Disciples—*By Swami Nikhilananda* .. 460
Maya, What is—*Editorial* .. 413
Milarepa, The hundred thousand songs of—(A review article)
—*By M. P. Pandit* .. 401
Mythical Religion and Philosophical Faith—*By Clarence Shute* .. 209
National Ideals, Our—*By Swami Siddinathananda* .. 50
NEWS AND REPORTS 39, 79, 119, 328, 367, 410, 452, 491, 545, 588, 628, 670
NOTES AND COMMENTS 35, 74, 116, 328, 365, 406, 450, 487, 541, 585, 625, 666
    About this number .. 328
    A Conscientious Man .. 667
    An Assessment of our Social Drift .. 626
    Distortion and Misreading of facts .. 75

PAGE

  End of the year .. 667
  Integrity .. 117
  Let us Learn to Think .. 35
  Mechanization .. 541
  Natural Disasters .. 450
  News That Shocks the World .. 488
  Some Thoughts on the Centenary of Swami Vivekananda .. 585
  Test Ban Treaty .. 406
  What We Can Learn From other Countries .. 487
  Who is Responsible for the Fatalistic Trend in our Masses .. 365
Obituary Note on Swami Saswatananda .. 364
Pancadaśī 1, 41, 81, 329, 371, 411, 453, 493, 549, 593, 633
Philosophical Disputation in the Court of Emperor Janaka
  —*By M. K. Venkatarama Iyer* .. 612
Prasthana Traya and Its Background—*By Swami Vimalananda* .. 7, 47, 87, 383
Prayer—*Editorial* .. 330
Purusa, Vacaspati and Vijnana Bhikshu on the Bhoktṛbhava of
  —*By Anima Sen Gupta* .. 387
Ramakrishna, Bhagavan (Poem)—*By Dilip Kumar Roy* .. 228
Ramakrishna and his Message, Some thoughts on Sri
  —*By Swami Vijnananda* .. 555
Ramakrishna on His beloved Disciple, Sri .. 121
Ramakrishna Order in the West, Centres of the (Illustrated) .. 323
Ramakrishna the Practical Mystic—*Editorial* .. 550
Ramakrishnananda and Ramakrishna Vedanta Movement in the South,
  Swami—*By Br. Madhavan* .. 107
Ramayana, The Greatness of—*By K. E. Parthasarathi* .. 576
Reason and Intuition—*By Kamakshi Dasa R. Somasundaram Aiyar* .. 661
Religion for the Common Man—*By D. K. Banerjee* .. 532
Religion, What makes sense in—*By Swami Nikhilananda* .. 598
Religion, Value of Practice in—*Editorial* .. 373
REVIEWS AND NOTICES 37, 76, 118, 366, 407, 451, 489, 542, 586, 626, 668
Samkhya Philosophy, Some views on—*Swami Vivekananda* .. 390
Samkhya Philosophy, Ethics of the—*By Dr. Anima Sen Gupta* .. 605
Sankara, India's Great Philosopher, Sri—*By P. Nagaraja Rao* .. 58
Science and Vivekananda—*By Maria Burgi* .. 647
Scriptures and their Purpose—*Editorial* .. 455
Self-Abnegation—*Editorial* .. 82
Self-Effort and Self-Surrender—*Editorial* .. 42
Serpent in Indian Lore, The—*By M. V. Sridatta Sarma* .. 580
Sivaratri in Nepal—*By N. K. Krishnamurthi* .. 584
Solitude in Religious Life, Significance of—*Editorial* .. 2
'Song of the Sannyasin', Original Manuscript of— .. 519
Spiritual Values in Education—*By Swami Vimalananda* .. 180
Sun, Worship of the—*By M. V. Sridatta Sarma* .. 100
Swamiji and the Core Values of our Culture—*By P. S. Naidu* .. 248
Swamiji and His Mission—*By T. S. Avinashilingam* .. 257
Symbols in Spiritual Life, Significance of—*Editorial* .. 634

PAGE
Three Momentous Decisions—*By Swami Kailasananda* .. 143
Tiruvarur Shrine — Repository of Excellent Sculptures
—*By N. Padmanabhan* .. 23
Upanishads, Back to the—*By Pravrajika Atmaprana* .. 281
Vivekananda, Personalities in the life of Swami .. 11, 62, 96
,, —(His Life and Message)—*By Swami Vijnananda* .. 12
,, —Embodiment of Dynamic Spirit—*By Br. Sudhangsu* .. 17
,, At Amarnath—*By N. K. Krishnamurthi* .. 22
,, And His Teachings—*By V. Sivasupramaniam* .. 110
,, What Holy Mother said about Swami .. 122
,, How the Brother Disciples looked upon Swami .. 123
,, — An Exemplar of His Teachings—*Editorial* .. 128
,, Homage to Swami .. 134
,, the Foremost Among Men (Sanskrit Poem with Translation)
—*By V. Raghavan* .. 136
,, 's Teachings, So-called contradictions in Swami
—*By Swami Suddhananda* .. 139, 335
,, and the Common Man of India, Swami—*By Swami Nikhilananda* 145
,, A Spokesman of the Divine Logos—*By S. Radhakrishnan* .. 160
,, On Spiritual Practice—*By Swami Pavitrananda* .. 164
,, to Modern India, Message of—*By Jawaharlal Nehru* .. 171
,, as a Leader of Thought—*By Swami Tapasyananda* .. 173
,, The Vedantic Nationalism of—*By T. M. P. Mahadevan* .. 177
,, and the Present Situation—*By Swami Adidevananda* .. 189
,, 's Inspired Talks, Further light on—*By Swami Atmaghanananda* .. 193, 356
,, and the Building of Modern India—*By Swami Satswarupananda* .. 199, 377, 418
,, Vedanta and—*By Suniti Kumar Chatterji* .. 201
,, — His Uniqueness—*By Swami Nityabodhananda* .. 206
,, : The Challenge to the West—*By C. T. K. Chari* .. 214
,, and the Scientific Ideal—*By J. M. G. Fell* .. 217, 350
,, Mankind needs the Comprehensive—*By Swami Budhananda* .. 229, 345
,, (Poem)—*By Dilip Kumar Roy* .. 236
,, Ideal of Womanhood according to Swami—*By Roma Chaudhuri* 237
,, on Art and Moksha, Swami—*By E. R. Marozzi* .. 242
,, Cottage at Thousand Island Park, New York,
Historical Sketch of—*By Malcolm Willis* .. 251
,, to Hindu Philosophy, Contribution of Swami
—*By M. P. Pandit* .. 260
—*By Anthony Elenjimittam* .. 265
,, and Certain Tenets of Hindu Philosophy—*By P. K. Sundaram* .. 261
,, 's Contribution to Hinduism—*By S. Rajagopala Sastri* 269
,, 's Message of Universalism—*By P. Sankaranarayanan* .. 275
,, 's Philosophy of Service—*By K. Chandrasekharan* .. 283
,, : The Hero Prophet of the Modern World
—*By Viswanath Prasad Varma* .. 287
,, and Social Reform—*By Bimla Prasad* .. 293
,, The Loving Heart of Swami—*By Sister Christine* .. 297
,, the Prophet of Strength and Fearlessness—*By P. Nagaraja Rao* .. 298

PAGE

Vivekananda and Vedanta in its Modern Application
—*By S. S. Raghavachar* .. 301
„ Samadarshitvam of Swami
—*By Swami Vimalananda* (A disciple of Swamiji) .. 304
„ — The Spiritual Ambassador of India—*By U. Thant* .. 305
„ and Indian Culture—*By Swami Premeshananda* 311, 442, 479, 558, 603
„ 's Childhood, Some incidents of Swami (Illustrated)
—*By Swami Suddhasatwananda* .. 313
„ and the Present Indian Context, Swami—*By Zakir Hussain* .. 338
„ Centenary Celebrations, Madras — An Appeal for Contributions 370
„ and His contribution to Vedanta—*By C. D. Deshmukh* .. 391
„ and Modern Man's Spiritual Quest, Swami
—*By Swami Budhananda* .. 424
„ The Ideal of Service as expounded by Swami
—*By P. M. Bhaskaran Nambudiripad* .. 430
„ — The Symbol of Modern Man—*By Mallika Gupta* .. 445
„ and Indian Renaissance—*By P. Sankaranarayanan* .. 499
„ and 'Idolatry'—*By K. Subrahmanyam* .. 502
„ and the Young Scientists of India : A Symposium :
Introduction—*Swami Budhananda* .. 505
1. *H. N. Nanjundiah* .. 508
2. *Aravindaksha Menon* .. 509
3. *M. A. Bhakta* .. 512
4. *M. R. Das* .. 516
„ Centenary Celebrations, Madras — Programme —
Jan. 10 to 26th, 1964 .. 547
„ 's Role in the Epic of Humanity—*By R. Ramakrishnan* .. 562
„ the World Citizen, Swami—*By R. C. S. Sarkar* .. 654
„ Ideal of Service as expounded by Swami—*By T. S. Devadoss* .. 659
Wandering Monk who Preached Human Unity, A
—*By Abinash Chandra Bose* .. 54
Worship Supreme—*By R. Ramakrishnan* .. 652
Yajnavalkya's Instruction to Emperor Janaka—*By M. K. Venkatarama Iyer* 63, 433
Yoga in the Gita, The import of—*By K. P. S. Choudhary* .. 565

INDEX TO REVIEWS AND NOTICES

Advaita and Neoplatonism : A Critical Study in Comparative Philosophy
—By J. F. Staal .. 542
Ananta Visva Hridayam (Telugu)—Published by Bhagavad Gita Mandiram 491
At Holy Mother's Feet—By Her Direct Disciples .. 490
Andal (Bengali)—By Byomakesh Bhattacharya .. 78
Books Acknowledged :
The Flute of New Life—By G. Hanumantha Rao .. 78
The Steadfast Intelligence—By Noshir Bilpodiwala .. 78

PAGE

Our Economic Resources—Publication Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting, New Delhi .. 78
Poor Man's Son and Other Stories—By A. S. P. Ayyar .. 78
Adhyatma-Vidya—By T. R. Rau .. 545
Japa and Saguna Upasana—By C. S. Ramaswami .. 545
Reminiscences of a Jurist—By K. R. R. Sastry .. 545
Mukundamala (Telugu)—Translated by Mallikarjunam .. 545
Viveka Rashmi (Bengali)—Pub. Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur .. 545
Bapu is Alive—By T. P. Bhat .. 545
India 1963—Publication Division, New Delhi .. 545
East & West Series : *Albert Schweitzer, Servants of Sind, Sons of Krishna, Wisdom of the Rishis*—By T. L. Vaswani .. 545

Big Idol—By R. B. Gregg .. 408
Chandogya Upanishad : Samkhya Point of View—By Dr Anima Sen Gupta 37
Chief Currents of Contemporary Philosophy—By Dhirendra Mohan Dutta 38
Classics on Logic—Edited by Dagobert D. Runes .. 37
Concept of Mukti in Advaita Vedanta—By A. G. Krishna Warrier .. 76
Correct Thinking and Standard Ideology—By L. N. Bhat .. 491
Creed of Saint Vinoba—By Vasant Nargolkar .. 366
Essays in Philosophy—Published by Ganesh & Co. .. 587
Gandhiji's Teachings and Philosophy—By C. Rajagopalachari .. 451
Gift of God—By M. K. Gandhi .. 490
God Experience—By Swami Ramdas .. 366
Government College Miscellany, Mangalore .. 491
Gypsies—Forgotten Children of India—By Chaman Lal .. 118
Hamara Ahar (Hindi)—By Swaminathan .. 119
Hinduism—By R. C. Zaehner .. 451
Immortal words (An Anthology) : Published by Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan 668
In the Vision of God : Parts 1 and 2—By Bhavan's Book University .. 586
Inspiring Precepts from the Divine Pen of Sri Sri Thakur Haranath——Compiled by A. Ramakrishna Sastri .. 366
Introduction to Comparative Philosophy—By P. T. Raju .. 668
Introduction to Sankara's Theory of Knowledge—By Dr N. K. Devaraja .. 451
Jnana Vijnana of Srimad Bhagavad Gita—By M. Ramachandra .. 490
Krishna Avatar, Vol I—By K. M. Munshi .. 544
Lalita Sahasranamam—By C. Suryanarayanamurti .. 37
Life Beautiful—By T. L. Vaswani .. 77
Law and the Lawyers—By M. K. Gandhi .. 409
Message of Holy Mother—By Advaita Ashrama .. 78
Peeps into Mysticism—By D. Ramaswami Ayyangar .. 543
Philosophy of Gorakhnath—By Akshaya Kumar Banerjea .. 489
Philosophies of History—By G. E. Cairns .. 407
Poet-Philosophers of the Rig Veda—By Dr. C. Kunhan Raja .. 668
Practical metaphysics of Zoroastrianism—By Minocheher Hormasji Toot .. 669
Present Position of Vedic Recitation and Vedic Sakhas—By Dr. V. Raghavan .. 78
President under the Indian Constitution—By K. M. Munshi .. 491

PAGE

Presuppositions of India's Philosophies—By K. H. Potter .. 489
Problem of Meaning in Indian Philosophy—By R. C. Pandeya .. 586
Problems of Under Developed Economy—By D. S. Nag .. 409
Public Administration—By Avasthi & Maheswari .. 38
Punyatirtha Bharat (Bengali)—Swami Divyatmananda .. 588
Quelques Aspects D'une Sadhana (French)—By Ma Suryananda Lakshmi 670
Ramakrishna Lives Vedanta—By Swami Chidbhavananda .. 544
Ramanuja's Teachings in his own words—By M. Yamunacharya .. 627
Ramanuja and Bowne—By F. K. Lazarus .. 544
Resurgence of India—By K. P. S. Menon .. 408
Selected Letters II—By M. K. Gandhi .. 119
Spiritual Teachings of Swami Abhedananda—(Translated by) P. Seshadri Aiyar .. 77
Sringeri Souvenir—Published by Sringeri Souvenir Committee .. 543
Sri Ramakrishnakarnamrita (Sanskrit)—By Ottoor Subrahmanyam Nambudiripad .. 669
Swami Brahmananda in Pictures—Pub. Sri Ramakrishna Math, Belur Math .. 626
Teachings of Tibetan Yoga—By Garma C. C. Chang .. 407
The Texts of Taoism Parts I & II—Translated by James Legge .. 669
Three Prophets—By T. L. Vaswani .. 408
Tirtha-Renu (Bengali)—By Swami Prajnanananda .. 627
Tirukkural (Tamil)—Edited by K. V. Jagannathan .. 545
Tripura Rahasya—By Swami Ramananda Saraswati .. 544
True Education—By M. K. Gandhi .. 118
Twenty-five years a Civilian—By A. S. Panchapakesa Iyer .. 78
Two Memorable Trials of Mahatma Gandhi—Compiled and Edited by R. K. Prabhu .. 409
Upanishads: Parts I & II—By Max Muller .. 451
Valmiki Maha Ramayana—By S. V. Ganapati .. 627
Village Swaraj—By M. K. Gandhi .. 409
Vivekananda Sahitya Sarvasvam (Malayalam) Vol 6—Pub! by Ramakrishna Ashrama, Vilangans, Trichur .. 544
Voice of Tayumanavar—By Shuddhananda Bharati .. 627
Western and Eastern Spiritual Values of Life—By Y. Jagannatham .. 119
What Religion is—By Swami Vivekananda (Edited by John Yale) .. 118
Yoga Vasishtha Ramayana, Vol. I—By D. N. Bose .. 627

.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
Swami Vivekananda

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VOL. L MAY 1963 No. 1

PANCADAŚĪ

प्रत्यक् तत्त्व विवेक

Discussion on the Indwelling Truth

शब्दस्पर्शादयो वेद्या वैचित्र्याज्जागरे पृथक्
ततो विभक्ता तत्संविदैकरूप्यान्न भिद्यते ॥ ३ ॥

Jāgaré in the waking state, *vedyāḥ* the knowables (the objects of knowledge), *śabda sparśādayaḥ* sound, touch and the like, *vaicitryāt* due to manifoldness, *pṛthak* different from one another. *Tataḥ* from them (sound, touch etc.), *vibhaktā* separated, *tatsamvit* the consciousness, *aikarupyāt* being of one form, *na* is not, *bhidyaté* set at variance.

In the waking state the knowables, sound, touch and the like, due to manifoldness are different from one another; separated from them (the objects of sound, touch etc.) the consciousness being of one form is not set at variance.

In the waking [illegible] is the condition when the senses perceive their objects, *the knowables*, the objects of knowledge, *sound, touch and the like*, i.e. of hearing, touching etc. and the elements like *ākāśa*, *vāyu* which are the ground of these sensations, *due to manifoldness*, being endowed with diverse forms and natures (like cow or elephant), are naturally *different from one another*. However, when *separated from them*, these objects and elements, *the consciousness*, which perceives them, *being of one form*, shining as consciousness and consciousness alone, *is not set at variance*, does not have like the ether (*ākāśa*) any diversity in it, as against, for instance when it is associated with the objects like jar or cow.

This consciousness (*samvit*) which shines in the *cit*, the mind-stuff, gathers various objects through the organs of cognition (*jñānendriya*) and like the water from a reservoir let into the fields, attains the respective forms and then we have the perception of the respective objects. Again this mind-stuff is like the mirror which reflects different objects when there is light; and like the mirror even when there is no object to be reflected remains bright. As even when the mirror is absent the light of the sun, which illumines the mirror, shines by itself, so too this consciousness shines by itself. This self-effulgent one is called *samvit*. By its effulgence everything else shines — that is the meaning.

SIGNIFICANCE OF SOLITUDE IN RELIGIOUS LIFE

The term solitude instantaneously brings to one's mind the majestic Himalayas, with its snow-capped peaks, its aromatic herbs and shady trees, its magnificent fauna and flora, its birds of beautiful plumage, flitting occasionally through the forest lisping sweet notes, its swift flowing currents and cool waters. The Himalayas has attracted and been attracting world-weary souls for ages now. It has sheltered in its bosom hermitages of Rishis ; and has preserved its holy atmosphere vibrant with the notes of the Vedic hymns and Vedantic lore, in all its purity of accent as were uttered by the teachers of yore. Away from the bustle of cities it had maintained all through the ages the dignity which strikes awe in man and has compelled recognition from poets. Kālidāsa, the famous Indian poet, goes into raptures while he speaks about the Himalayas. He says : 'There in the northern direction lies the godly king of mountains, called the Himalayas, entering the seas on the east and the west (with its rivers) ; and stands lofty and high, as if it were the earth's measuring rod'.[1] He runs on in this strain for another twelve verses, in his memorable work *Kumārasambhava.* Rarely were the sacred precincts of the Himalayas disturbed in the past by the changes in the political atmosphere or by social upheavals. It was the haven of rest and abode of peace for the restless and the enquiring. In the then national set-up when the aged ones withdrew from the responsibilities of the world, after fully meeting the demands made on them by the world, it was the Himalayas which charmed them by its quietude, vastness and solitude, its picturesqueness and calmness. What does this signify? It signifies two things : that outer calmness and solitude are the essential factors which contribute to inner calmness and secondly that it is in the lap of natur that man learns to be natural, to shed hi artificiality.

Solitude, a prime necessity

It is possible that the moderns, attuned they are to the hectic life of the present civ lization, and feel one with the ideas expresse in Cowper's poem :

> 'O Solitude where are the charms
> That sages have seen in thy face?
> Better to live in the midst of alarms
> Than dwell in this horrible place.'
>
> *Alexander Selkirk*, Stanza

may interpret this retirement of the aged the forest, in the past, as an admission failure to face the problems of life, or ta it as an indication of setting in of senility a certain age. This argument seems to ma a travesty of facts. For it is a matter conjecture alone as to how many senile peop can leave their homes, at the fag end of th life's journey willingly, to take to a hard and uncertain life. Moreover, it is secur and not insecurity that men seek even in bloom of youth, at the height of their vigo and strength — even if we take the pres trends as the standard. What to speak th of the infirm old age? This postulati therefore falls to the ground being basele On the other hand it stands to reason presume that there was a genuine desire those who relinquished the responsibilities the world, when at the height of their fa to know the Reality. It was almost an possibility for them, moulded as their li were in the hoary tradition, to forget or lo sight of the aim of life. The goal of life k constantly renewing and reviewing bef their minds' vision so that when they h reached the point of satiation in their desi rather attained dispassion towards them hav been discriminately engaged in fulfilling the they no more sought to be entangled into maze. Solitude was what they longed fo to think of the Creator, Who sent them into this world, from Whom they were separated and unto Whom they yearned to be united again.

---

[1] अस्त्युत्तरस्यां दिशि देवतात्मा हिमालयो नाम
नगाधिराजः ।
पूर्वापरौ तोयनिधी वगाह्य स्थितः पृथिव्या इव
मानदण्डः ॥
—*Kumarasambhavam.*

Religion apart, solitude is a felt need in all thoughtful avocations. It may be the mathematician working at his table, the scientist busy in the laboratory or the student at his studies, in every case solitude is a thing that can never be dispensed with. Observe how prudently, the diligent students shut themselves up to pore over their studies! How deliberately the scientists go into seclusion to think and work out their hypotheses! When we see that even in secular life isolation is at times necessary, we must pause to ask: how much more conscientiously should not religious aspirants seek loneliness?

Solitude of the mind

Solitude again can be classified into three types: solitude of the forest or mountain caves, solitude of the mind and solitude of the Atman (Self or Soul). Although outer calmness aids man to attain inner peace, the outer aids alone without the active co-operation of the mind are of little avail in spiritual life. The mind must first be educated to dissociate itself from its desires and then cultivated to think of the Supreme. It is said that man may obtain the grace of the preceptor, the grace of the Lord and also be blessed with holy company but if he has not the grace of his own mind all this will not help him in any way spiritually. Bhartṛhari in his *Vairāgya-śataka* most tellingly describes how tenaciously the mind clings to desires: 'My food is what is collected by begging that too insipid and taken only once, bed the bare earth, body the only servant, clothes the old tattered rags, yet, alas, the desires for enjoyment won't leave me.'[2] So strong are the desires of an uncultivated mind left to associate freely with the objects of the senses.

It is a long way to attain solitude or one-pointedness of the mind but on that account none need be dispirited, none need lose heart. As we have instances of despondency, we also have models of grit and grim determination. It is said of Vacaspati Misra, the writer of the well-known commentary *Bhāmati* (on the Brahma Sutras), that at a very early age he took to the writing of this commentary. After he had begun his work he was married to a young and beautiful girl. But he was so absorbed in his work that he did not know when the day dawned or the night came. He did not know who looked after his bodily needs. When tired he would lay down his body to rest on the mat near his writing desk and when he got up he commenced his work. His wife, however, dutifully and without a murmur looked after his needs. This went on for years and years until he had finished his work. Then when he lifted his head to look at the world he saw beside him a grey-haired woman. He asked her who she was and when he came to know that she was his wife and that she it was who had served him faithfully all through, he out of gratitude made her immortal by naming his *magnum opus* after her. This is an instance of one-pointedness of the mind. From this we learn that all that is wanted is aptitude and resolution. The same concentrated mind if given to God can contact Him too. That is how the saints and sages attained realization.

Sri Ramakrishna is very emphatic about having recourse to solitude for the purpose of practising spiritual disciplines. He says that we should practise disciplines in the forest, in a secluded corner of the house or in the mind. Again he remarks 'If you ask me how long you should live in solitude away from your family, I should say that it would be good for you if you could spend even one day in such a manner. Three days at a time are still better. One may live in solitude for twelve days, a month, three months, or a year, according to one's convenience and ability.' This advice he gives to householders who cannot devote all their time to God. What then to speak of aspirants who have forsaken their all for the sake of God? And what type of solitude does he prescribe. He exhorts: 'When you practise discipline in solitude, keep yourself entirely away from your family. You must not allow your wife, son, daughter, mother, father, sister, brother, friends, or relatives near you. While thus practising discipline in solitude, you should think "I have no one else in the world. God is my all".' Continuing Sri Ramakrishna remarks, 'The mind is like milk. If you keep the mind in the world, which is like water, then the milk and water will get mixed. That is why people keep milk in a quiet place and let it set into curd, and then churn butter from it. Likewise, through spiritual discipline practised in solitude, churn the butter of knowledge and devotion from the milk of the mind. Then that butter can easily be kept in the water of the world. It will not get mixed with the world. The mind will float detached on the water of the world.'

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[2] भिक्षाऽशनं तदपि नीरसमेकवारं
शय्या च भूः परिजनो निजदेहमात्रम् ।
वस्त्रंविशीर्णशतखण्डमयी च कन्था
हाहा तथाऽपि विषया न परित्यजन्ति ॥
—*Vairagya Sataka*, 15.

To control and train the turbulent mind we have not only to withdraw it from the senses and sense-objects but also direct it towards God. For, the mind requires some support to cling on to. You cannot make a vacuum of the mind all at once. The moment you try to do it all types of thoughts will enter it. The one thing the mind foolishly believes is, that it will be able to hold on to the gross objects. It envelops that object with its veil of attachment. But soon it gets disillusioned, the attachment snaps due to the loss of or estrangement from the object of attachment. Then it is that frustration sets in. Again and again the mind tries to settle itself on gross sense-objects and sensations, and repeatedly it is disillusioned. With each blow thus received man withdraws into himself little by little until at last he leaves off hankering after worldly things and completely turns inward for solace. With some this process takes a long time, with some others a few disillusio
ments are sufficient to awaken them to reali

Taste for solitude

A taste for solitude is generated when
clamourings of the senses are silenced and
senses themselves are rudely shocked out
their gear by the internal blows the mi
receives or the external sufferings the bo
endures. When this taste develops and
directed to God a great part of the battle
life is won. But mind being what it is requi
constant watching. Discrimination is the o
watchdog man has to prevent his sheep
thoughts from straying on to forbidden grou
With discrimination alert and taste for solitu
active we can brace ourselves for the li
fray. If ever anyone by the grace of the Lo
is able to quieten his mind and develop ta
for solitude it will be the height of folly
his part if he does not utilize the occasion
naturalize this taste, make it his own. T
solitude is man's highest treasure. It will
be preposterous if we say that it is in a w
the bestower of health as well. For does
man everyday of his life long for rest a
sleep? What is deep sleep? What keeps h
company there? Alone, alone he is in th
state. Yet he is not afraid to go into it. T
sleep is the redeeming factor. It soothes ma
a shock, embalms many a wound and hel
the body to recover its strength. It is the so
tude of the deep sleep that restores much
the energy that man wastes while in his wa
ing and dream states.

The question is how to cultivate the tas
for solitude. No hard and fast rule can
laid down about it. Broadly speaking it c
be obtained by practice and dispassion. Di
passion can be arrived at by discriminatio
What is this discrimination? Between wh
are we to discriminate? 'Two types of objec
the good and the pleasant, come to man. T
wise one weighing the pros and cons of bo
chooses the good alone as it outweighs t
pleasant, but the shortsighted one thinks o
about the life on this earth and accepts t

pleasant,' [3] says the *Kaṭhopaniṣad*. The disrimination is to be between the good, which eads one to liberation and pleasant, which nakes for bondage. How to know the one rom the other? There are two ways: one is o listen to the words of the scriptures and he wise, other to learn by experience. How o distinguish between the two experiences is old us by the Bhagavad Gita: 'The joy vhich in the beginning appears like poison ut in the end tastes like nectar is *sāttvika*, or it is the outcome of the pure mind's intense ontemplation on the Atman. The joy one xperiences due to the contact of the senses vith the sense-objects which appears as nectar n the beginning but turns out to be like poison n the end is termed *rājasika*. There is again third type of pleasure called *tāmasika* which n the beginning as well as in the end deludes nan by inducing sleep, lethargy, and neglience.' [4] Herein we get clear indications as hat to expect when we follow a certain path. Vhatever joy one gets from the contact with e outside world, is of a transient nature and roduces an unfavourable reaction. It saps ur energy. In other words whatever ennobles ne's character, expands one's heart, augments ne's forbearance, increases one's love to felw beings, that is the path of dispassion and e opposite is the way to bondage.

Solitude a great cure for artificiality

Many opinions have been expressed for and ainst solitude. We need not discuss here eir merits or demerits. Sufficient it is to say at, according to one's experience whether veet or bitter one expresses one's opinion. gain there is good and bad in every thing. man may read the *Bhāgavata* by the light a lamp and another may forge a document the same light. Can we then blame the light for the latter's abominable act? Similarly if some few tend to become beastly in their behaviour after retiring into solitude, the blame need not be placed at solitude's door. There is, however, one good thing in solitude which all must concede, viz. one cannot deceive anyone else except oneself in solitude, but in society you cannot be so sure. Observe the world and we can see how artificial it has become. Convinced though we be of a wrong being done, or a wicked act being perpetrated, we either wink at it or try to justify it. Again society frames some norms, some rules, and every one pretends to follow them. Let them get the least chance of evading these rules and it is doubtful whether ten to one could withstand the temptations of utilizing the opportunity to aggrandize, to enrich, or to earn name for themselves at others' cost. Man's character gets exposed at that time. In the solitude of his mind, he may harbour much ill-will towards a person but in society he shows much affection towards him. The better a person can hide his ill-feelings and odious thoughts and look polished and good, the more he is thought of in this world. It is therefore said 'judge a man not by the great works he does but by his little acts. The former he does for praise, the latter unwittingly reveal his character'. Let a person go into solitude for a few moments daily and analyse his own acts and we believe that it is possible that he may turn a new leaf in his life. The main point is, the feverish activity which engages man of the modern times all his day and all his life leaves him no respite for introspection. He is more a machine, more like an automaton than a thinking individual. In this age of specialization man's thinking also is done by some one else for him. He only follows the dotted line. And when this happens it is easy to be led astray than when one thinks for himself. Many of man's artificialities would disappear if only he is a little introspective.

Solitude of the Atman

Now we come to the solitude of the Atman, which is the natural culmination of the other two. For no calmness, no peace that depends on created things, can be eternal in duration. Man seeks spirituality for attaining permanent release from the three sorts of miseries,[5] viz. *ādhyātmika* (misery due to bodily and mental ailments), *ādhibhautika* (caused by elements or created beings), *ādhidaivika* (caused by supernatural agencies). Each of these miseries, however, can be mitigated or got rid of for the *time being* by other agencies also ; for instance, misery due to bodily ailments can be cured temporarily by medicine ; mental worries due to any wants may be overcome by fulfilling that want. Likewise other miseries too can be overcome for a time by other helps. All these, however, keep on repeating and hence there is that great desire to be entirely free from them. We have to take recourse to the spirit, the Atman the uncreated Being to go beyond misery. When we realize the solitude of the Atman, and find bliss in the Atman alone we are free. When no other object remains to attract us, 'when we find that the Atman alone has become all this, where is infatuation and where is misery for him who sees oneness everywhere,'[6] says the *Īśāvāsyopaniṣad*.

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[3] श्रेयश्च प्रेयश्च मनुष्यमेतस्तौ संपरीत्य
विविनक्ति धीरः ।
श्रेयो हि धीरोऽभि प्रेयसो वृणीते प्रेयो मंदो
योगक्षेमात् वृणीते ॥
—*Katha*. 2. 2.

[4] *Bhagavad Gita*, Chap. 18, 37 to 39.

In spite of all this when man is alone he gets frightened. What is the cause of fear ? The reason is not far to seek. Man's congenital tendencies are too strong. He has long been accustomed to live in groups, in constant turmoil. He is addicted to the charms of society so much that he finds it difficult to live alone. Swami Vivekananda says : 'Can a man who has been used to the turmoil and the rush of life live at ease if he comes to a quiet place ? He suffers and perchance he may lose his mind.' So mere intellectual grasp of the Upaniṣadic truths is of no avail. A constant rumination o them besides the actual practice of solitu is essential to become fearless. The *Bṛha āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* gives a description how Prajapati also, at the beginning creation was deluded and afraid. It says 'In the beginning this (universe) was o the self (Viraj), of human form. He reflec and found nothing else but himself. . . . this he was afraid. Therefore even now a so tary one is afraid. He then reflected, "as th is none else than myself what am I afraid On reflecting thus fear left him, for what there to fear ? It is from a second entity al that fear comes.'[7] Śankara in his commen on these verses says : 'Because this Pur was endowed with a body and limbs, he afraid of his extinction, owing to a false noti And as in our case the way he adopted to rid of this false notion, which was the ca of fear, was by acquiring the right knowle of the Atman.' Śankara here states that too are deluded by the false notion of extinction with the death of the body and only way to get over this fear is to know Atman in its true perspective. How to the right knowledge ? By reflection in solit on the teachings of the Śrutis. The *Bṛh āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* says elsewhere, 'Where duality is seen there only one sees ano one hears another. But when this dua vanishes then who will see whom, who hear whom.'[8] All our troubles and mis start with seeing duality and all disappear the realization of Oneness, which is in Atman.

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[5] आत्यन्तिक दु:ख निवृत्ति ।

[6] यस्मिन्सर्वाणिभूतानि आत्मैवाभूद्विजानत: ।
तत्र को मोह: क: शोक एकत्वमनुपश्यत: ॥
—*Īśāvāsyopaniṣad*. 7.

[7] आत्मैवेदमग्र आसीत्पुरुषविध: सोऽनुवीक्ष्य न
दात्मनोऽपश्यत्......सोऽबिभेत्तस्मादेकाकी
स हायमीक्षां चक्रे यन्मदन्यन्नास्ति
बिभेमीति तत एवास्य भयं वीयाय कस्माद्ध्य
द्वितीयाद्वै भयं भवति ॥
—*Br. Up.*, I. iv.

[8] यत्र हि द्वैतमिव भवति तदितर इतरं पश्यति
—*Br. Up.*, II. iv.

PRASTHANA TRAYA AND ITS BACKGROUND

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

The Nature, Extent and Purport of the Vedas

We have seen that even philologists like Max Muller have ungrudgingly admitted 'whatever may be the date of the Vedic Hymns whether 1500 or 15000 B.C., they have their own unique place and stand by themselves in the literature of the world. They tell us something of the early growth of the human mind of which we find no trace anywhere else.... They will always retain their peculiar value, far superior to the oldest chronicles, far superior to the most ancient inscriptions, for, every verse, nay, every word in them is an authentic document in the history of the greatest empire, the empire of the human mind.' ... (*Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*). The Vedas give us, says Wilson, 'abundant information of all that is most interesting in the contemplation of antiquity.' Even in the eyes of these historical and philological scholars the Vedas have often appeared as the earliest documents of the human mind that we possess. Prof. Jacobi of Germany assigns a date as early as 4500 B.C. to the Rig Veda and Tilak assigned a date about 5000 B.C. There are other scholars who conjecture that the earliest part of the Vedas could not have been produced before 1500 B.C. It is better not to spend our time in studying the various arguments in fixing a date for the Vedas as it would be impossible to arrive at a date which may be considered precise and certain. So we shall now turn to the traditional estimate of the Vedas.

We have seen that according to the students of comparative religion and philosophy who have done extensive research work in the Vedic field from their own evolutionary viewpoint for the last couple of centuries, the Vedas are constituted of Mantras or hymns mostly describing the personified forces of nature, prayers, exegesis, legend and religio-philosophical speculation.

This is not wholly acceptable even to a highly intelligent scholar like Sri Aurobindo who has been trained thoroughly in Western philological and philosophical methods and whose practical investigations in the field of yoga and Vedic tradition led him to the conclusion that the Vedas are replete with suggestions of secret doctrines, of mystic philosophies. He says, 'the hypothesis I propose is that the Rig Veda is itself the one considerable document that remains to us from the early period of human thought . . . when the spiritual and psychological knowledge of the race was concealed, for reasons now difficult to determine, in a veil of concrete and material figures and symbols which protected the sense from the profane, and revealed it to the initiated. One of the leading principles of the mystics was the sacredness and secrecy of self-knowledge and the true knowledge of the Gods. This wisdom was they thought unfit for, perhaps even dangerous to, the ordinary human mind, or in any case liable to perversion and misuse and loss of virtue if revealed to vulgar and unpurified spirits. Hence they favoured the existence of an outer worship effective but imperfect for the profane and an inner discipline for the initiate, and clothed their language in words and images which had equally a spiritual sense for the elect and a concrete sense for the mass of ordinary worshippers. The Vedic hymns were conceived and constructed on these principles.' — (*Arya*, Vol. I, page 60). Although this view is not acceptable to the evolutionary historian and is not endorsed by the Mīmāmsakas, there is sufficient evidence in the Vedas themselves and their auxiliary literature to confirm the substantial truth of Sri Aurobindo's statement. That this view is based upon a thorough insight into the contents of the Vedas and subsequent religious tradition may be borne out even from the following simple considerations.

The conception of Brahmavidyā as a form of worship of the Supreme involving the study of the entire Veda is as early as the Vedas themselves. The statement in the *Kaṭhopanishad, sarve vedā yatpadam āmananti,* alludes to the fact that all the Vedas have but one ultimate purpose of revealing and declaring the Supreme Being. In the *Hari Vamsa* we get the following significant verse :

वेदे रामायणे चैव पुराणे भारते तथा, आदावन्ते च मध्ये च हरि: सर्वत्र वर्ण्यते ।

This extract shows that in the Vedas, *Rāmāyaṇa* and *Mahābhārata,* God (Hari) alone is expounded in the beginning, middle and in the end. In the Bhagavad Gita Sri Krishna as the Supreme Being declares Himself as the Subject matter to be known from all Vedas, *vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyo*. There is an interesting verse repeated at the commencement of a holy reading of the *Rāmāyaṇa* as follows :

वेद वेद्ये परे पुंसि जाते दशरथात्मजे वेद: प्राचेतसादासीत् साक्षाद्रामायणात्मना ।

i.e., when the supreme Divine who is known from the Vedas alone incarnated Himself as the son of Daśaratha, the Veda too in a corresponding manner gained embodiment in the form of *Rāmāyaṇa* through the agency of Vālmīki. The *Brahmabindu Upaniṣad* has the following suggestive verse :

द्वे विद्ये वेदितव्ये तु शब्दब्रह्म परं च यत् शब्दब्रह्मणि निष्णात: परं ब्रह्माधिगच्छति । 17.

(See also *Mahābhārata, Shanti Parva,* chapter 270-1 & 2.)

'One ought to know the science of Supreme Brahman and Śabda Brahman. When one becomes an adept in Śabda Brahman, he atta to the Parabrahman consequently.' This ve asserts that the outcome of the proper st of the Vedas is the knowledge of Brahm There is again the well known verse :

वेदाक्षराणि यावन्ति पठितानि द्विजातिभि: तावं
हरिनामानि कीर्तितानि न संशय: ।

—*Nārāyaṇa Uttara Tāpinyupaniṣad*, 3

'Every one of the syllables of the Vedas re ed by the Dwijas is a recitation of the Di name without least doubt.' This statemen the *Smṛtisārasamuccaya* perhaps sums up argument advanced by the previous quotat These and many other statements havin similar trend present the time-old view po that God is the main theme of the Veda. I this view point can be grasped and app ciated only through the indigenous *vidyās pradāya.*

इतिहास पुराणाभ्यां वेद समुपबृंहयेत् । बिभेत्य
श्रुतात् वेदो मामयं प्रहरेदिति ।

This verse tells us that one should plain the Vedas and reinforce their mea in the light of Itihāsa and Purāna. The V is terribly afraid and thinks within itself ' I will have to suffer casualties' when it one whose knowledge is sadly limited, co to expound it. Later on the Vedas attai complete supremacy in respect of supersen ous knowledge and divine sanction for sett up social conduct and virtue. The *Bri Nāradīya Purāṇa* has the following obse tion :

शब्दब्रह्ममयो विष्णु: वेदा: साक्षात् हरि: स्मृ
वेदाध्यायी तु यो विप्र: सर्वान्कामानवाप्नुयात् ॥
यस्य शरीरस्थो न स पापेन लिप्यते । वेदात्मा
विज्ञेय: शरीरै: किं प्रयोजनम् ॥

"Vishnu is Śabda Brahman itself. The tra tional belief is that the Vedas are Hari Hi self. The Vipra who is in the habit of reci the Vedas achieves his ends. In whose b the knowledge of the Vedas reside, he is touched by sin. He is of the nature of

Veda itself. What is the use of considering him in terms of his human body?" Though these statements might appear to make an exaggerated claim, they tell in fact that God is the goal of the Vedas and nothing entitles one to greater respect than the acquisition, preservation and dissemination of the Vedas. This however does not mean that mere learning of the Vedas by rote was alone enough to give one this respectable position. There is an interesting verse in the *Shanti Parva* of the *Mahābhārata* which deserves to be remembered in this connection :

न छन्दांसि वृजिनात्तारयन्ति मायाविनं मायया वर्तमानम् । नीडं शकुन्तादिव जातपक्षाः छन्दांसि एनं प्रजहात्यन्त काले ॥

'A person who is crafty and deceitful and crooked in his conduct is not saved by Veda Mantras from his sin and transgressions. When the time of his end comes the verses of the Vedas which he has learnt, will take leave of him just as young ones of birds hatched from eggs take leave of their nest as soon as their wings sprout.'

The importance of knowing the meaning of the Vedas and acting in accordance with them is also variously stressed by Yaska and other great Rishis. The great Sayanacharya makes the following arresting remark in his introduction to the *Rig Veda Bhāṣya* :

सकल देवतानां धर्मस्य परब्रह्मतत्त्वस्य च प्रतिपादकं वेदं अनुच्चार्य परनिन्दानृत कलहहेतुं लौकिकीं वार्तां सर्वत्र उच्चारयतः स्पष्ट एव वाचि भाग्याभावः। यद्यप्यसौ काव्यनाटकादिकं शृणोति तदपि निरर्थकं एव तच्छ्रवणं, तेन सुकृतमार्गज्ञानाभावात् ॥

"Evidently that man is unfortunate who everywhere indulges only in worldly talk consisting of talking ill of others, telling lies and causing mutual quarrels, without utilizing his time for the recitation of the Vedas which describe Gods, religious duty and the supreme Divine Reality. Even if one puts forth the excuse that he is interested in poetry, drama and the like that too is of no purpose because by their pursuits he cannot gain the knowledge of the path of righteousness.'

That Veda or Śruti is a revelation from God is not purely a fiction of the later ages as some of the modernists would think. The Rig Veda itself contains statements that the Mantras were inspired by God. *Devattam brahma gāyata* and similar other statements in 1-37-4 ; 8-32-27 ; 1-3-11 ; 2-23-2 etc., make that point clear.

In explaining the purport of the Vedas we have seen God alone is the central theme of the Vedas. We have to consider now another great conception which is closely connected with this Central theme. In a single sentence the ancient ācharyas had brought about this conception of two-fold aim of the Veda. '*Dharmabrahmaṇi vedaikavedye*', Dharma and Brahma should be known from the Veda alone. Dharma and Brahma are the web and the woof of the fabric of Veda. In one of the Puranic verses quoted above, it was stated that Veda and God are identical in a figurative way. Another puranic verse states thus :

ये च वेदविदो विप्राः ये चान्ये तत्त्ववादिनः ।
ते वदन्ति महात्मानं कृष्णं धर्मं सनातनम् ॥

Those vipras who know the Vedas and others who have understood the truth say that magnanimous Krishna is eternal Dharma. Here we find God and Dharma identified. This interchanging of Brahma and Dharma is nothing but figurative, analogous to the attribution of qualities of the end also to the means. In the 13th chapter of the Bhagavad Gita for example, the *jnana sadhanas* are enumerated and named as jnana. Here also Brahma is the end and Dharma is the means. And when we speak of Dharma alone as the content of the Veda, Dharma is distinguished as Siddha Dharma (or ever existing Dharma) and Sādhya Dharma (Dharma that is to be practised by men). In this discrimination Siddha Dharma is the same as Brahma, and that gives us the reason why in the verse mentioned above Sri Krishna Himself was called Sanātana Dharma. The term Dharma is of primary importance in the study of Hinduism and Buddhism. It has a long history and carries with it innumerable meanings which should be clearly distinguished, examined and understood in each context where it is employed to function.

The word Dharma is almost untranslatable into any other language. It is derived from the root *dhṛ* — to uphold, to support and to nourish. It is used both as a noun and an adjective in the Rig Veda as 'Dharmani'. In the masculine sense in the same Veda, the word is used in the sense upholder, supporter, and sustainer. From this meaning, by extension, yajñās and rites were denoted by Dharma. Thus sacrifices being the regular and central activities of the devout Rishis the meaning 'fixed principles' or 'rules of conduct' was also attached to the word in many contexts. See for example Rig Veda 4-53-3, 5-63-7, 6-70-1 etc. In the Atharva Veda there are occurrences of the word Dharma to show that it has now the added sense of Punya or merit acquired by the performance of religious duties. In the Aitareya Brahmana, Dharma has come to mean the whole body of religious duties. Again in the Chhandogya Upanishad Dharma stands for the peculiar duties of Brahmachari, Grihastha, Vanaprastha and Sannyasi. Thus the term Dharma acquired wider and deeper significance and came to note the privileges, duties and obligations of a man, his standard of conduct as a member of the class or society to which he belongs and as a person belonging to a particular stage of life. The term Swadharma is often interpreted in this manner by Manu and Yājñavalkya and based on this conception Medhātithi enumerates Varna Dharma, Āshrama Dharma, Varnāshrama Dharma, Naimittika Dharma (duties performed as expiation or *prāyascitta*) and Guna Dharma or personal traits and qualities required of a person. Dharma in its social expressions included *ăcāra* or law and *vyavahāra* or administration of justice. All these aspects of dharma had their root in the Veda and Jaimini who codified and rationalised the injunctive part (*vidhi*) or karma kanda of th Veda, defined Dharma as a desirable goal result that was indicated by a mandate Vidhi Vakhya of the Veda. This is accep as a very inclusive definition of Dharma su sequently. The authors of the various D śanas or Smritis also touched up the conce tion and added some traits here and the Thus Kanāda defined Dharma thus *yato'bh daya nihśreyasou saḥ dharmaḥ,* that fr which one attains progress and prosper here and moksha hereafter is Dharma. It also interesting to note in this connection t various descriptions and definitions of Dhar given by various Rishis.

यमार्याः क्रियमाणन्तु शंसन्त्यागमवेदिनः। धर्मं
विगर्हन्ते तमधर्मं प्रचक्षते ॥

This verse attributed to Viswamitra sta that Dharma is what is approved by righte people who understand the Vedas and *adhar* is what they disapprove. Manu has the f lowing description of Dharma :

धृतिः क्षमा दमोऽस्तेयं शौचमिन्द्रिय निग्रहः।
ह्रीविद्या सत्यमक्रोधो दशमं धर्मलक्षणम् ॥

—*Manu Samhita,* 6.

The forms of Dharma are ten : coura patience, control of the mind, not taking w belongs to another without his knowled purity, control of the senses, sense of sha pursuit of knowledge of the self, truthfuln and freedom from anger. Vyāsa gives a m extensive list enumerating truthfulness, se control, austerity, purity, contentment, se of shame, patience, straightforwardness, s knowledge, sense-control, mercy and medi tion under the heading Sanātana Dhar As a proper culmination and conclusion this brief exposition of Dharma it would most fitting to add in the end an observat of Yājñavalkya :

इज्याचार दया अहिंसा दमस्वाध्याय कर्मणा
अयं हि परमो धर्मः यद्योगेनात्मदर्शनम् ॥

'Performance of sacrifice, religious practi kindness, non-injury, self-control, study the Vedas and performance of one's duties are no doubt Dharma; but realization of the Ātman through the practice of Yoga is the highest and most excellent Dharma.' In a previous context we have seen that the pattern of any society depends largely upon the knowledge and traditions inherited from the past supplemented by the present laws and regulations. Man always lives in socially organised groups and social control becomes a necessity for the well being of the collective unit. This naturally gives rise to rights and duties and a force that authorises, confirms and countenances the conduct of the individuals. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* gives us a glimpse of the earliest conception of justice in the statement *abalīyān baliyānam sam āśamsate dharmeṇa*, 'The weak control the strong by Dharma or law.' This social control is effected in diverse ways and the most universal form of it is some kind of sanction, social, political, legal or religious. This principle of sanction keeps the balance of society and keeps it on the rail. In the Vedic Religion, both in spiritual and temporal matters, the sanction comes from Dharma, and Dharma is based upon different factors of which the Veda is primary. We have now to see the pramāṇas or sources of Dharma. Yājñavalkya says that Śruti, Smṛti, practice of good people, what is conducive to the good of one's own Ātman and desires and motives born of proper discrimination and thought are the basis of Dharma and for ascertaining this one may turn to Purāṇa, nyāya, mīmāmsa, Dharma śāstras, the six vedāngas and the four Vedas. These latter books are also called Vidyāsthāna (*Yājñavalkya Smṛti* 1-7-3 and 4). Gautama starts his Dharma Sutra with a statement *vedo dharma mūlam* which sums up the whole idea mainly that every aspect of Dharma from good conduct and just behaviour in this world to realization of God is to be found in the Vedas. It should not be forgotten that these authorities give a high place for *śiṣṭācāra* also in determining one's duties. But we must particularly remember their definition of *śiṣṭa.* Otherwise there is a likelihood of raising anyone in whom we are interested to that position. Vasiṣṭha explains the term *śiṣṭa* by the term *akāmātma* or one who has no self-interest. Again they are defined as *ātmavanto vṛddhā samyag-vinītāḥ dambhalobhamoha vimuktāḥ veda-vidaḥ*, i.e., those self-possessing, experienced, well trained knowers of the Veda, free from hypocrisy, greed and delusion.

(*To be continued*)

PERSONALITIES IN THE LIFE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Durga Charan Dutta: 'Streams of consciousness which flow into the river of family life are here and there characterised by the likeness of personality and sameness of tendency. Thus, it is often seen that the third or the fourth generation takes on the qualities of the great grandfather or of some other distant ancestor.' With Swami Vivekananda too the tendency of the life of Sannyasa can be said to have been 'in the blood.' Durga Charan Dutta, of Simla District of the City of Calcutta, a brilliant 'youth with all the promise of the world before him,' a partner in his father's profession of law was whisked away by the current that was too powerful to withstand — the call of God. He was twenty-five when he forsook his home, wife, child and comfort to respond to that call. Nothing was heard of him afterwards except on two occasions, once at Banaras and again at Calcutta. It was at this time in Calcutta that his friends wanted to bring him back to the life of the household and had locked him up in his ancestral house for three days. But on the fourth day he escaped them severing all bonds. This was the paternal grandfather of Swami Vivekananda.

(*Continued on Page* 21)

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(His Life and Message)

SWAMI VIJNANANDA

A world embracing personality that Swami Vivekananda was, it is but natural that the whole world should rise as one man to render reverential homage to his hallowed memory. People all over the world are paying glowing tributes to the eminent Swami for his Himalayan attainments in the realm of spirituality, for his enlightening contributions of permanent value to philosophy, for his monumental success in upgrading and enriching the religious consciousness of the world and for his supreme achievement of founding a world-wide order of monks with 'liberation of self' as its intent and 'service of God in man' as its patent. While we are beholden to the magnanimous Swami for the religious fervour he has graciously instilled into us by his spiritual life and divine message, it is well-nigh impossible for even the most competent amongst us to render adequate tributes to him for, there is something transcendental and impersonal, something mystical and infinite about him that always eludes our grasp. Nobody without a touch of the divine and an element of greatness in him can comprehend him. So, what best we can all do is to recapitulate the several graces and blessings he has benignly bestowed on us by his exemplary life and invaluable message.

While his learned writings and fiery speeches reveal to us several glimpses of his dynamic personality, the soaring heights and the profound depths and dimensions of his spiritual being remain always an unrevealed mystery. A plunge into the inmost recesses of his personality is far beyond our reach. Only a second Vivekananda, as he himself once said, or a man of Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual stature and prophetic vision could probe into his soul and comprehend its potentialities and excellences. Whether it is an accident nature or a blessing of destiny or a gracio act of Providence, the historical fact of Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda havi been born in the same century with only few years apart, their lives entwined togeth into a single mission, has a great spirit significance to India and the world. T impact and the import of these two gr personalities on, and to our nation have b to remind us of our sacred spiritual herita and to focus our attention on our future divi destiny. It would be more correct to say th they were the two aspects of one personal than to say that they were two personaliti For, they were nearer to each other than t personalities could be. If one was the b of the other, the latter was the soul of t former. They were like the static and dyn mic aspects of the one soul-force.

If, as Romain Rolland says, Sri Ra krishna was the consummation of three tho sand years of spiritual life of three hund million Hindus, Swami Vivekananda was t world-regenerating force released as a res of that consummation. Spiritual consumm tion is never divorced from world-regenerati They are a single process. If the form initiates the latter, the latter presupposes t former. The two-fold process ends in t spiritual consummation of the world as whole. Without Sri Ramakrishna, the spi tual potentialities of Naren would have b locked up forever and the world would have seen the birth of the awakener of so that Swami Vivekananda was ; without Swa Vivekananda the world would not ha awakened to and imbibed the fountain spirituality that Sri Ramakrishna was. Wit out either, their common divine mission wo lave remained unfulfilled and the world vould have lost what nothing in the world ould have redeemed.

Life of Swami Vivekananda is distinguished y three progressive stages, one maturing into mother, one fulfilling another. The first is he stage of a burning search for Truth. The econd is the period of *sādhana* and personal ealization of Truth. The last phase is of elf-expression and self-dedication for world-egeneration. A predisposition biased in avour of Truth, a rare gift of birth, and adiant purity permeating his thoughts, actions nd emotions, a precious heritage from his levout mother, were the two predominant eatures of his youth. While purity protected im from all vulgar temptations and influences f dubious nature to which youth generally uccumbs, his passion for Truth gave him the liscrimination to sift Truth from untruth, the Real from the unreal, the noble from the gnoble, the reverent from the irreverent and lso the determination to pursue the True, the Real, the noble and the holy to their ultimate ealization.

It is indeed these two, the pursuit of good nd the pursuit of Truth that brought him to ri Ramakrishna who prepared him for his uture role of a world-awakener. It is true hat he passed through a sceptical phase in is youth. But this scepticism of his was ather due to his dissatisfaction with the mere ustomary and conventional acceptance of the xistence of God than due to any basic diselief in God. His passion for Truth and Reality was of such intensity that only the ighest standards of proof could satisfy it. ince nobody could provide him with such a roof, his passion for Truth took an appearnce of scepticism. His scepticism was a neasure of his hankering for Reality. It was rebellion not against Truth but against blind elief in Truth. The proof that he wanted vas nothing less and nothing other than actual erception of and participation in Truth. Vith him scepticism was only a passing mood. t did not satisfy his soul. Beneath the surace of his sceptic mind, there was an intense desire for God. To find a way to God if God existed was a compelling need with him. So he was in search of one who knew Truth from personal experience and not by mere faith. With all his scepticism he possessed that rare and wonderful spiritual quality for the attainment of religious consciousness — a positive enthusiasm for the good and the True. He had a natural dislike for material values though he had his doubts about spiritual realities. The monastic urge was instinctive with him. A meditative mind surcharged with an intuition for Truth was his prize possession. By a study of different systems of philosophy of the East and the West, he had found out that philosophy was, at best, only a way of speculation about Truth and not a path to discovery of Truth. Philosophy offers only mediate knowledge of Truth. But mediate knowledge is no knowledge for it does not remove ignorance. It is no better than mere belief. Philosophy like faith is no substitute for immediate knowledge of Truth. Neither faith nor philosophy could appease Naren's hunger for Truth.

In Sri Ramakrishna, he found not only a seer of God but God Himself. God had fully appropriated him to Himself. Sri Ramakrishna was a living proof of God. Swami Vivekananda was astounded by the authenticity of the proof of God that Sri Ramakrishna was and his critical apparatus gave way. He who anticipated disappointment found fulfilment. He who came to argue remained to adore. He who wanted God, got Him. His search for Truth came to an end. Sri Ramakrishna graced him with a vision of God. Swami Vivekananda could no more doubt the existence of God; he could no more resist God; nay, he could no more live without God. By the divine touch of Sri Ramakrishna, Naren the critic of God had turned into Naren the advocate of God. If Swami Vivekananda found fulfilment of his search for God in Sri Ramakrishna, the latter found the fulfilment of his divine mission in the former. It was a mutual participation and fulfilment. Sri Ramakrishna shared his God with Swami

Vivekananda and the latter surrendered himself to participate in the former's divine mission.

Swami Vivekananda was now Sri Ramakrishna's anointed one. Sri Ramakrishna crowned him not only with God but also with his destiny. Swami Vivekananda wanted to immerse himself in God. But Sri Ramakrishna strongly reminded him of his mission on earth which was to awaken the world to the glory of God whom he had just discovered. Sri Ramakrishna invested him with the realization that the world is a manifestation of God and hence service rendered to mankind is worship offered to God. Sri Ramakrishna marked out his destiny. He was to be the leader of the band of monastic disciples devoted to realization of God and rejuvenation of mankind. In order to prepare him for this immense task, Sri Ramakrishna not only roused his manifold potentialities to dynamic expression but also transferred to him his own spiritual powers. With this the role of Sri Ramakrishna ended and the role of Swami Vivekananda began in their common mission of founding the kingdom of God on earth.

After the passing away of the Master, the first thing that Swami Vivekananda did was to knit together into a strong spiritual brotherhood all the monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. This done, he travelled all over India. He saw India in all its glory and in all its agony. He saw that the agony far outweighed the glory. He gathered into his soul, as it were, all the agony of India. His soul was set ablaze by the sight of poverty and ignorance of the downtrodden people and his heart bled for them. The poignant realization that the destiny of India was tied up with his own, dawned upon him. He saw his own humiliation in the degradation of the masses. He realized that he was to work out his own perfection through the material and spiritual uplift of India. He saw that the nation had lost its soul and individuality and was in a moribund condition. Religion had become static. It was evident more in its external forms than in its spirit. To give back to the nation its lost soul and individuality, remove its poverty and ignorance, and make Hinduism more dynamic were the id he now set forth before himself.

The Parliament of Religions at Chic offered him an opportunity to go to the pr perous West to preach the high *Veda* truths of divinity of the human soul, harmony of religions and unity of existe to the materialistic West. He wanted confer upon the West the benefits of Indian spiritual wisdom, and get in excha for India the benefits of their material achi ments. His triumphant success at the Par ment of Religions showed that the Americ were highly receptive and responsive to message of *Vedanta*. His inspired speec roused in their hearts tremendous interes India and *Vedanta*. He harnessed their vour to the two-fold work which he foun in America, the work of disseminating truths of *Vedanta* and creating in the Am cans an abiding interest to participate in reconstruction of poor India. The work partly a success. It led to the foundation his work in India. The Ramakrishna Miss with its twin ideals of salvation and ser was established. But the strenuous work he did in America and India and the c suming passion with which he did his w had such a devastating effect on his he that he was taken away all-too premature

Now let us turn to his message. His m sage has both national and international port. It is not only relevant and adequate the present time but also significant for time to come.

What is his message to Indians? 'Relig and religion alone is the life of India, and w that goes India will die, inspite of politics, spite of social reforms, inspite of Kube wealth poured upon the head of every one her children.' Religious instinct and spirit impulse have been natural to India since a They have been the law of her being and sustaining power from time immemorial. gradual decline and the consequent poverty these intrinsic impulses are, according

Swami Vivekananda, largely responsible for the present degradation of India. The only way to regeneration is to strengthen the nation in her inborn impulses. A nation can blossom into her full stature through her native genius alone. If the Indian nation, after passing through several vicissitudes in the course of her history, still lives to-day, it is because we have not yet completely given up our God and religion. Indians must be re-educated into their divine status and on the foundation of spiritual heritage and divine destiny, the nation's future must be built. The re-awakening into divinity is the only pathway to salvation for India and for that matter for all mankind. During his sojourn through India as a wandering monk, Swami Vivekananda had discovered both the secret of India's past greatness and that of her future regeneration. Tuning the life to the high spiritual values was the secret of its great past and loyalty to hese ideals is the key to her future awakening.

Swami Vivekananda has strongly repudiated the foolish contention of some people that the degradation of India is solely due to her xcessive spiritual preoccupation. According o him, it is the spiritual apathy and the consequent spiritual disintegration that has led to he present social and national degeneration. Religion is not to blame for the social and ational evils. Evils exist not with religion but against religion. It is because people had ost the true spirit of religion and were too much involved in the external mechanical minutiae of religion that corruption had set in he social and national life. Religion, both n its positive and negative aspects, had been misunderstood and misapplied to life. Religion had become a matter of a mere practice f rituals than practice of presence of God. Devotion to rituals had been substituted for devotion to God. Religion had been reduced o mere priestcraft and orthodoxy. Strict observance of the rigid rules of caste was onsidered to be the substance of religion han a life devoted to spiritual ideals. Renun- ation was looked upon as madness and sin. eligion was more professed than practised. It was professed for the sake of powers and privileges than practised for spiritual redemption. Priestcraft had become the bane of India. The higher castes were tyrannising the lower castes. The autocracy of priesthood and despotism of caste had created terrible demarcations within the social body making the majority of the followers of *Dharma* outcastes on earth. Religion had become more mechanical and less human. This state of affairs was nothing but a perversion of religion. Swami Vivekananda felt that the only hope was a re-statement of the culture of the *Rishis*.

Swami Vivekananda wanted an overall improvement in the material condition of India. He saw that religion was understood or rather misunderstood to be exclusive of material values. If India is poor and backward, it was partly because Indians had neglected material welfare. True religion is not against material values as such. It is against only an *attitude* of materialism which believes in the ultimacy of material values and makes material prosperity the *summum bonum* of life. Religion does not demand the neglect of material well-being. It only wants subordination of material values to spiritual ends. Material well-being within limits is a necessity for the spiritual values to thrive. Swami Vivekananda used to say that religion which does not feed and clothe the poor is no religion at all. If material values divorced from spiritual aims cannot give happiness to man, spiritual propensities cannot thrive under material insolvency.

India must learn to rejuvenate herself by improving the material standards through the help of Western science. Eastern wisdom should be integrated with Western science. Wisdom without rejuvenation will not survive. On the other hand science without guidance from wisdom, becomes unethical and destroys itself. If neglect of material values has brought about backwardness of India, indifference to spiritual values is the cause of disintegration of the West. No culture, however high-souled it may be, will last long if it is without strength. Again no culture of enduring values can be built on purely materialistic foundations. Swami Vivekananda felt the separation of science and religion to be really tragic and wanted their integration for a wholesome development of India and the world. He was of the opinion that the active elements of Western culture and spiritual elements of the culture of the East could be fused to form an ideal culture.

Swami Vivekananda's is a message of strength. For him, strength was synonymous with spirituality. He believed that without strength neither virtues could be cultivated nor spiritual values could be realized. Physical strength according to him, was the first condition of spiritual life. He himself was a virile figure full of vigour and strength. He wanted people to have muscles of iron and nerves of steel. A weak body, according to him, is a greater bondage to the soul than a strong body. There is hope, he used to say, for even a wicked man if he is strong in mind and body. His strength will perhaps, one day help him to get rid of his wickedness. But there is little hope for a weak man even if he is good. A strong and healthy body is a must and a minimum for the practice of religion. But a strong body alone will not suffice. A strong mind is a greater need. The capacity to distinguish good from bad, the real from the apparent, the permanent from the ephemeral and strong will-power to pursue the good alone, the real alone, the eternal alone is an important aspect of strength conceived by Swami Vivekananda. He wanted people to have a mind made up of that same stuff which the thunderbolt is made of. Man, according to him, is a dynamo of infinite power. Through proper education this power can be released for constructive purposes. He wanted man-making, life-building, character-making education, an education that would liberate their inexhaustible potentialities, to be given to the youth of the country. Above all he emphasized soul-strength. Soul-strength is the real strength, he used to say. Soul is the repository of illimitable strength. This strength is
lost to man through his Self-forgetfulne
Man must be made aware of this soul-stren
through Self-knowledge. The Upanis
declare that he who knows the Self atta
soul-strength. Soul-strength is the pana
for all evils of life.

Swami Vivekananda repeatedly decl
that renunciation and service are the natio
ideals of India. 'If the national life could
intensified through these channels everyth
else would take care of itself.' Renuncia
alone had always been the great dynamo
strength in India. Renunciation and ser
may well be called the warp and woof of
texture of Indian culture. If renuncia
points to the transcendental aim of our cult
service reflects its humanitarian outlook.
culture is a culture of human values
spiritual ends. Neither the human values
the spiritual aims can be ignored. Hu
values fulfil themselves only in spiritual
tiny of man; in themselves they are not
sufficient. On the other hand, spiritual va
can be realized only by transcending hu
values and not by ignoring them. So ren
ciation and service, contemplation and w
are integrated in our culture and relig
Without service, renunciation is only neg
in value. It acquires a positive value an
creative expression when it inspires sel
service of mankind. The discipline of ren
ciation for God fulfils itself in service of
Service without an attitude of self-sacrific
both a burden and a bondage; but w
inspired by love of God it brings about m
elevation and spiritual liberation.

Our fall from the ideals of renunciation
service, is responsible to a great extent for
moral degeneration and spiritual ap
Mere social service will not bring about s
reform. Neither mere withdrawal from so
procures salvation. When only social ser
becomes a mode of worship of God, whe
is divested of all selfish motives, when a s
of renunciation is assimilated to the wor
social regeneration, material uplift and s
tual redemption of our country will
place.

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Swami Vivekananda was the great teacher of the synthesis of all religions. Religion, he taught, is the means to attain God-consciousness. Each religion is an authentic path to reach God. Just as all rivers lead to the ocean, all religions lead to God, who is the one fact of all religions. Diverse religions are necessary to suit diverse tastes and temperaments. The world is spiritually one. The faith behind all modes of worship is the same. There is significance in all forms of worship, however crude and foolish they may seem to us. Swami Vivekananda says that man does not proceed from error to truth, but from lower truth to higher truth. Truth is not the monopoly of any religion. No religion is all-inclusive of Truth and no religion is all-exclusive of Truth. While no religion is absolute, every religion is true. Every religion is Truth-bearing. Every religion is a view of Reality, though all religions are not equally abounding in Reality. People quarrel about religion because they do not see the underlying unity of all faiths. Instead of emphasizing God-consciousness which is the core of religion, people emphasize rituals, myths and other secondary details. For each man, whether he be a Hindu or a Muslim or a Christian, salvation lies in one-pointed devotion to his own faith. But this, Swami Vivekananda insisted, does not preclude the necessity of accepting and respecting other faiths as true. One has to expand and enrich one's religious consciousness by learning spiritual truths from other faiths. While one's own religion is quite adequate to give one an intuitive knowledge of Reality, practice of other faiths opens up new vistas in the panorama of Reality. Sri Ramakrishna, a modern Incarnation of God, who had the unique merit of having practised several faiths to their fruition, had Reality thrown open to him in Its infinite abundance. He was thus the proof of oneness and uniqueness of all religions. Swami Vivekananda exhorted people to develop that catholicity of outlook which accepts all the religious systems of the world as true and assimilate the spiritual truths revealed in them.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA — EMBODIMENT OF THE DYNAMIC SPIRIT

Br. SUDHANGSU

The important prerequisite for any attainment, material or spiritual, is strength. Even what we often mistake or confuse as 'hope' is also the outcome of strength. The word 'strength' itself conveys a sense of hope to our minds. And this proves sufficiently the inter-action between the body and the mind and their relative co-ordination and invariable coherence.

In the same way a concomitant coherent relation between 'physicality' and 'divinity' can be proved to exist inspite of an apparent contradiction in our common sense approach to the matter. The Upaniṣads say: 'This Atman is not to be attained by the weak.'[1] 'Let my body be fit.'[2] There is again the prayer of the vedic student which runs: 'Let my limbs... grow in strength.'[3] Of course, here strength can never mean brute animal force, something muscular only. But it implies a healthy frame or body to hold or withstand the tremendous charge of divine emotion; and energy and will-power to face all sorts of worldly situations and difficulties with an equanimous mind.

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[1] *nāyamātmā balahīnena labhyaḥ.*
Mundaka Up. 3.2.4.

[2] *śarīram mé vicarṣaṇam* Tait. Up. 1.3.1.

[3] *āpyāyantu mamāngāni*

Swami Saradananda emphasizing this fact in his memorable work *Sri Ramakrishna the Great Master* remarks : ' The Master used to say when the powerful flood of divine mood comes on human life unexpectedly, it cannot be suppressed or concealed by thousands of efforts. That is not all ; the gross inert body often fails to contain that powerful onrush of divine emotion in the mind and is completely shattered.... A fit body is necessary to contain the abounding surge of emotions born of perfect knowledge or perfect devotion.' (page 148).

The life of the great sannyasin Swami Vivekananda bears a grand testimony to this ancient Upaniṣadic Truth — Strength, Energy and Character, and it is no wonder that he has proclaimed a gospel of strength, and fearlessness throughout his life, for the regeneration of mankind as a whole.

Prof. Benoy K. Sarkar says : 'The words that are constantly on Swami Vivekananda's lips are the Upaniṣads. These philosophical documents of ancient India appeal to him simply because they can be utilised as texts of his own cult of Shakti, energy, individuality, and manhood.'[4] To quote Swami Vivekananda himself : ' You will be nearer to Heaven through foot-ball than through a study of Gita. You will understand Gita better with your biceps, your muscles, a little stronger. You will understand the mighty genius and mighty strength of Krishna better with a little of strong blood in you. You will understand Upaniṣad better and the glory of Atman when your body stands firm upon your feet and you feel yourselves a man.'

A rare combination he was of both an athletic body and an indomitable spirit, bold and adventurous. Visualize his youthful hefty structure of about 5′ 9″, strong neck with a tartar jaw, looking down upon all that is cowardism, death and weakness. Think of him with his head erect, proclaiming, ' What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel — gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and secrets of the universe and will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it meant going to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face '. Look at his life which is an illustration of this very commandment of his.

Narendranath, as he was called in his pre-monastic days, as a child was very naughty and restless. His overabundance of energy and an expanding life of the spirit "was constantly renewed throughout his life. This warrior and conqueror wanted to have everything both, God and the world — to dominate everything — to renounce everything. The superfluity of power striving within his Roman Athlete body and imperator brain contended for mastery. But this very excess of force made it impossible for him to confine his torrential waters within any bed save that of the river of god — and complete surrender to the unity."

As a boy he loved games and was very adventurous. He looked down upon blind belief and reproved his companions if they believed in anything without verifying. Once he climbed a tree in which they were told lived a demon who would break their necks if they climbed it, and when nothing happened he severely reprimanded his friends for their foolish attitude and fear-complex. He had an unusual presence of mind backed by an undaunting courage to meet all situations, even at such an age. At one time ' he went in the company of a younger relative to a charak fair.... As they were returning it had grown dark, the lad became slightly separated in the crowd. And at that moment a carriage came dashing along. Naren who believed his companion to be immediately behind him, turned at the noise and to his utter dismay saw that it was a question of life and death for the little lad, who stood terrified in the middle of the road.... He ran quickly to his help and heedless of his own safety and grabbing the lad with his right hand pulled him almost from under the horse's hoofs.'

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[4] *The Might of Man* — in the Social Philosophy of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda.

Gradually with the advance of adolescence he grew more and more constructive in his attitude. In his enthusiasm to cultivate a strong physique he organized a gymnasium, but noticing the poor show of the whole affair, abandoned the project and started visiting one in the neighbourhood. He took up lessons in fencing, wrestling, rowing etc. No doubt, this training and discipline of the body helped him a great deal in his after life to withstand hardships and difficulties.

Another day while returning by boat from a holiday trip, Naren and his party were placed in a difficult predicament by the boatmen. One of the boys in the party had vomited in the boat and the boatman would not allow them to land without their cleaning the boat. But as the boat neared the shore Naren jumped out of the boat and with the help of two British soldiers who happened to pass that way rescued his friends from the situation.

On another occasion it was to procure a few permits for seeing the British Man-of-war, *Syraphis*, that the boy Naren unhesitatingly went to the top floor of the building where the office was situated by a spiral at the backyard, being refused permission at the front gate by the sentry. It was no wonder therefore that the same spirit of adventure made him, later as Swami Vivekananda, to seek entry to the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, without any formal credentials of any sort.

Indeed the life of this great hero was full of struggle. It was not surely roses and myrtles for him. He had to fight almost every inch of the ground that he covered from his blooming days of youth upto the last lap of his journey to eternity. His saga of life tells us of the great Vedantin-athlete that he was; and points to the fact of his being victorious in the olympic of this world, amidst poverty and despair. It is interesting as Romain Rolland points out, 'to contrast his athletic form with his seraphic Master who was quite opposite to that of Swami Vivekananda, in his "fragile", "tender", "serene" and "elegant" features.' But it was not strange at all that Sri Ramakrishna was so much attracted by the strong, intellectual and pure Naren. He saw a vigorous soul within the youth which had come for the spiritual service of the whole world.

Surely, he might have felt in the presence of Narendra, the emanation of the Shiva-spirit. Sri Ramakrishna understood by his insight the flame in the torch at the very first sight. Once he remarked pointing a scar on his forehead that the injury had helped Naren to get over his overabundant energy and checked him from doing harm to the world.

Another time, Sri Ramakrishna exclaimed, 'Behold! Here is Naren, See! See! of what power of insight he has! It is like a shoreless sea of radiance! The Mother Mahamaya Herself cannot approach more than within ten feet of him! She is bound by the very glory She has imparted to him! O, Mother, put a little of Thy māyā into Narendra.' Perhaps, it was only after such a prayer, Sri Ramakrishna could entrap Naren with his own divine māyā or divine love, which Naren found thereafter impossible to throw off or break asunder from. As Naren himself has said, the Master slowly strengthened his influence over him through his ever increasing and most powerful chord of love. Sri Ramakrishna an astute teacher as he was, fully understood Naren, the great receptacle, who could bear the infinite charges of religious experiences, the stress and the strain of it. The analogy that he used about Naren was that of a 'sea', deep, majestic and calm, unperturbed even at the entry of an elephant.

Within a very short time of the Master's passing away, Swami Vivekananda took up the task of binding the young disciples of the Master into a brotherhood as expressly commanded by him. Soon, however, the desire to taste the life of a fearless and fetterless monk, with none but the eternal and Divine Lord to depend upon was on him. His wanderings took him from the Himalayas to the

Cape, through desert and forest, in rain and sun, many times without food or shelter. Romain Rolland has magnificently expressed it : 'He was like a Gargantua rending asunder the swathing bonds that were throttling him. . . . This young athlete reduced to death's door by his unused power was driven forth by a vital instinct,' and then quotes Swami Vivekananda in one place, 'I am going but shall never come back, until I can burst upon the society like a bomb.'

In the course of these wanderings, through unknown hills and dales of India, through the sacred cities and its ancient ruins and religious monuments, he had many experiences. While passing through a jungle in the Himalayas, one day he saw some bleached human bones with bits of torn *gerua* (ochre cloth) lying here and there. Swamiji describes these wandering days in one of his subsequent California lectures thus : 'Many times I have been in the jaws of death, starving, footsore, and weary. For days together I had no food and often I could walk no further. I would lie down under a tree and life would seem to be ebbing away.'

On one occasion during his travels a Maharaja invited him and in the course of discussion passed a remark against the idol-worship of the Hindus ; Swami Vivekananda became very grave and asked one of the courtiers present there to take down a picture of the Maharaja from the wall and spit on it. When it was, naturally, refused he retorted sharply that it was after all not the Maharaja in person but only his likeness, a picture of him. The audience including the Maharaja who listened to this were all struck with the aptness of the analogy and the force of argument.

We gather from the 'Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda', how he was pursued by some police officers somewhere in Bihar due to his stalwart majestic figure. The policemen mistook him to be a hero of a disturbance that had broken out in the locality amongst the tribes. The second encounter with the police took place in Calcutta. Swamiji was living at that time in a suburb of Calcutta quietly with his friends. A superintendent of Police known to him, cordially invited him to his place. There in the course of his talk the police officer suddenly burst out : 'I am convinced, it is some nefarious plot that you and your friends are after. You are their ring leader. Out with the whole Truth and then I shall arrange so that you are made an approver'. Swamiji replied, 'You have called me to your house on a false pretext and have made a false accusation against me and my companions. That is your profession, I on the other hand have been taught not to resent an insult. If I had been a criminal and conspirator there would be nothing to prevent me from wringing your neck, before you could call out for help. As it is I leave you in peace'. With these words he walked out of the house.

Swami Vivekananda's pilgrimage in South India is of a historical significance and one cannot overlook the high spiritual mood of the Swami at the Cape. He braved the breakers and swam a portion of the most choppy sea and reached a rock to spend some days in quiet meditation on the problems that were seething in his mind — the uplift of the masses of India.

An incident about his concentration and control of the mind can be mentioned here. 'Once whilst in some town on the bank of a river in America, he chanced to meet some youngmen who were shooting vainly from a bridge at egg shells, which were moving with the current of a small stream. These shells were loosely strung together with strings, at one end of which were tied small bits of wood inserted crosswise into the shells and at the other a tiny stone, which served as a sort of anchor. The Swami watched them smiling at their failure ; one of the party noticed this and challenged him to try his hand at the game, assuring him that it was not so easy as it looked. Then the Swami took a gun and successively hit about a dozen shells! They were all astonished, and thought that he must evidently be a practised hand. But he assured them to the contrary saying that he had never handled a gun before and the secret of his success lay in the concentration of the mind.'

His health, however, started giving way under the pressure of incessant work in America. Single handed fighter as he was, he came to India to prepare the internal stage of his Vedantic mission. Romain Rolland puts it, 'Earthly cries, the suffering of the ages, fluttered round him like a flight of famished gulls', and the body of Swami Vivekananda cracked itself in excited love and sympathy.

Swamiji writes in a letter to 'M'. 'But unfortunately I was already exhausted by hard work in England and this tremendous exertion in the heat of Southern India prostrated me completely.' So he started for Darjeeling and from there to Almora, where he stayed for sometime and recouped from much of his exhaustion as he writes again in some of his letters: 'I began to take a lot of exercise on horse back both morning and evening.... ' 'After the first week of my gymnastics, I have scarcely felt so well since I was a boy and used to have *kusti* exercises. I really began to feel that it was pleasure to have a body. Every movement made me conscious of strength, every movement of muscle was pleasurable. That exhilarating feeling has subsided somewhat, yet I feel very strong. In a trial of strength, I could make both G. G. and N. go down before me in a minute. You ought to see me doctor, when I sit meditating in front of the beautiful snow-peaks and repeat "*na tasya, rogo na jarā na mṛtyu prāptasya hi yogāgnimayam śarīram.*" (He has neither disease, nor decay, nor death, for verily, he has obtained a body full of the fire of yoga.)'

After a short respite Swamiji plunged again into work. Perhaps he felt intuitively that he had only a few years left of this earthly existence and also perceived the immensity of work that he was to accomplish. So he tirelessly worked on till the last day of his life on earth. Thus ended the eventful life of the great sage, but he still lives on and moves the world through the great message and inspiring words that he has left to posterity.

PERSONALITIES IN THE LIFE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(*Continued from Page* 11)

Viswanath Dutta: Viswanath Dutta, the only son of Durga Charan Dutta, and father of Swami Vivekananda, was a leading lawyer of Calcutta, and had a good income. But he lived like a prince and spent more than he earned. He was an ardent scholar, liberal in his outlook, noble of nature and compassionate and generous towards the afflicted. He loved music and was an expert at cooking. These noble qualities of his father left their profound impress on the mind of Swami Vivekananda.

Bhuvaneswar Devi: The mother of Swami Vivekananda, Bhuvaneswari Devi was a pious lady. She prayed to Lord Vireswar Shiva of Bạnaras and fasted that a son be born to her. Her prayers were answered and a son was born to her who was to be the future Swami Vivekananda. She had a prodigious memory and could recite passages from the Rāmāyaṇa and Mahābhārata, the two great Indian Epics, with such an ease that one felt that she was imbued with the sentiments of the lore to the fullest extent. 'And she bequeathed this royally to her children as their great inheritance. And it was this bequest that throbbed in the personality, behind the race pride and race consciousness of her son, Swami Vivekananda.' Swamiji had his first lessons in education also at his mother's knees.

(*To be continued*)

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AT AMARNATH

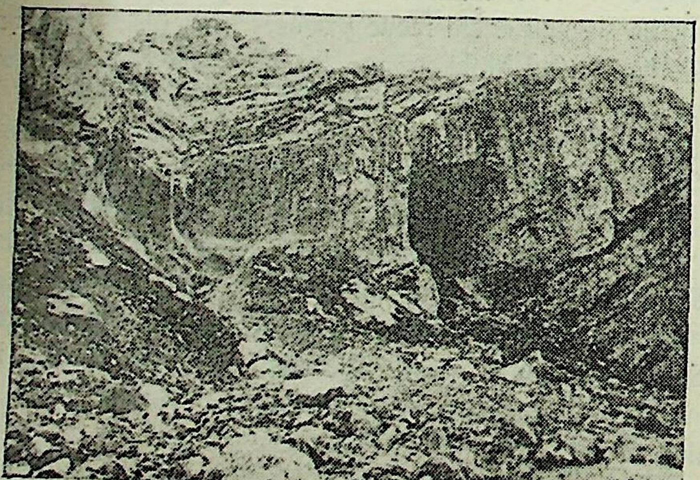
N. K. KRISHNAMURTI

'When he realises who and what he is, he will no longer remain in the body', said Bhagawan Sri Ramakrishna referring to his chosen disciple Swami Vivekananda. In fact, Swamiji had a mystical experience at the cave of Amarnath which he visited on August 2, 1898, of which he seldom spoke. When earnestly solicited by a disciple, Swamiji related his Amarnath journey and experience as follows: 'Since visiting Amarnath I feel as if Shiva is sitting on my head for twenty-four hours and would not come down. On the way to Amarnath, I made a very steep ascent on the mountain. Pilgrims do not generally travel by that path. But the determination came upon me that I must go by that path, and so I did. The labour of the strenuous ascent has told on my body. The cold there is so biting that you feel it like pin-pricks. I entered the cave with only my *kaupin* on and my body smeared with the holy ash; I did not then feel any cold or heat. But when I came out of the temple, I was benumbed by the cold. I saw three or four white pigeons; whether they live in the cave or the neighbouring hills, I could not ascertain. I have heard that the sight of the pigeons brings to fruition whatever desires you may have.'

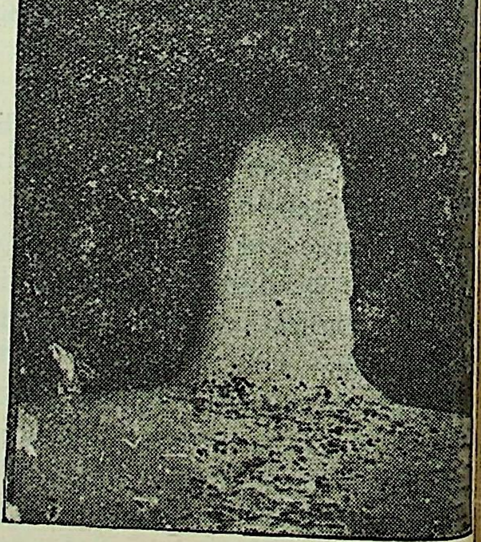
Beyond saying that Shiva Himself had appeared before him and that he had been gran ed the grace of Amarnath, the Lord of Immortality, not to die until he himself shou choose to throw off his mortal bonds, Swami never spoke of this experience. Swamiji to one of his European disciples that the Imag was the Lord Himself. It was all worsh there. He had never seen anything so beau ful, sublime and so inspiring.

Though Swamiji was accompanied by Sist Nivedita, he went last inside the cave aft bathing in the stream running in front of th cave, as it were with a purpose. He reache the cave, his whole body shaking with em tion. The cave itself was a large one and th Shiva (Linga) in a niche of deepest shado appeared to Swamiji that He was sitting o a throne. Swamiji knelt before the Ling He almost swooned with emotion. It wa sure that he came face to face with Lor Mahadeva Himself in the cave. He wa saturated with the presence of Lord Mah deva. He could speak nothing except o Lord Shiva for some days after his retu from the cave.

This was Swamiji's experience at the ca of Amarnath.



The cave of Amarnath



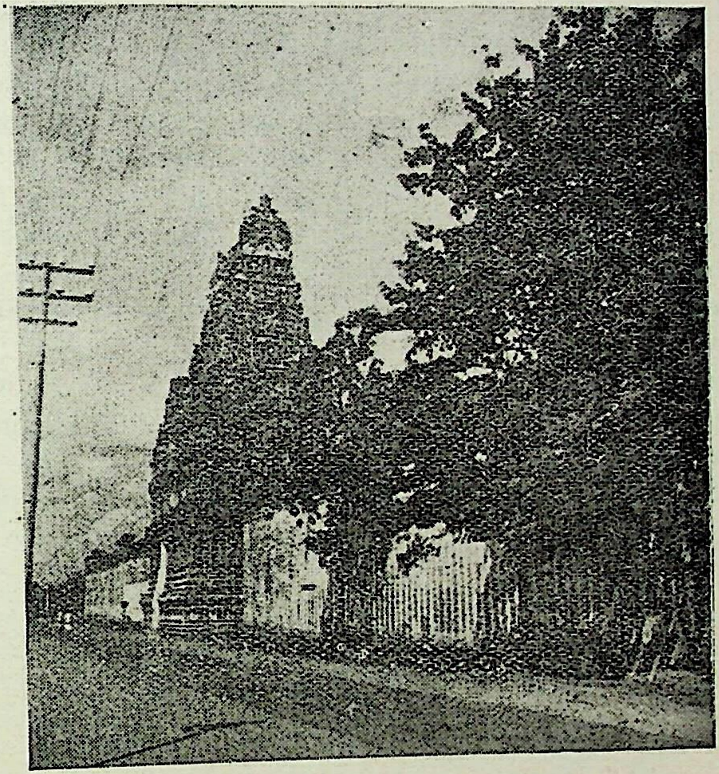
The Shiva Linga in the Cave of Amarnat

TIRUVARUR SHRINE - REPOSITORY OF EXCELLENT SCULPTURES

N. PADMANABHAN

> "Do not forget the sacred name of Tiruvarur
> Where shines Lord Siva in all His Splendour;
> Boundless is His grace brooding over that place
> That brings you all gains and spiritual solace"

Thus makes the famous Śaivite saint Sundarar an appeal in his delicious Thevara hymns. The life of this saint is woven with many legends and it reveals that amongst all the sixty-three celebrated Śaivite saints, he was the only savant who led a princely life and obtained plenty of gold coins and innumerable favours from the Lord whenever required. In Śaivite literature, he is therefore reverently known as the 'Companion of the Lord'. True to this day, the truth of his appeal is being testified by thousands and thousands of devotees, who undertake a pilgrimage to Tiruvarur.



The richly ornamented Tower of Tiruvarur Temple

Fifty-five kilometres to the north east of Thanjavur in Madras State, nestles Tiruvarur as an important Railway Junction on the Thanjavur-Nagore branch of the Southern Railway. In the field of commerce also, this city holds a pre-eminent position for its fine toys, pith-work and charming designs of mats. In ancient literature, Tiruvarur is praised not only as a famous pilgrimage centre but also as an earliest metropolis of the ancient Chola Kingdom in the far south. Those, who are acquainted with the renowned legend of the righteousness of the Chola Emperor, Manuneeti Chola, are familiar with the name of this city.

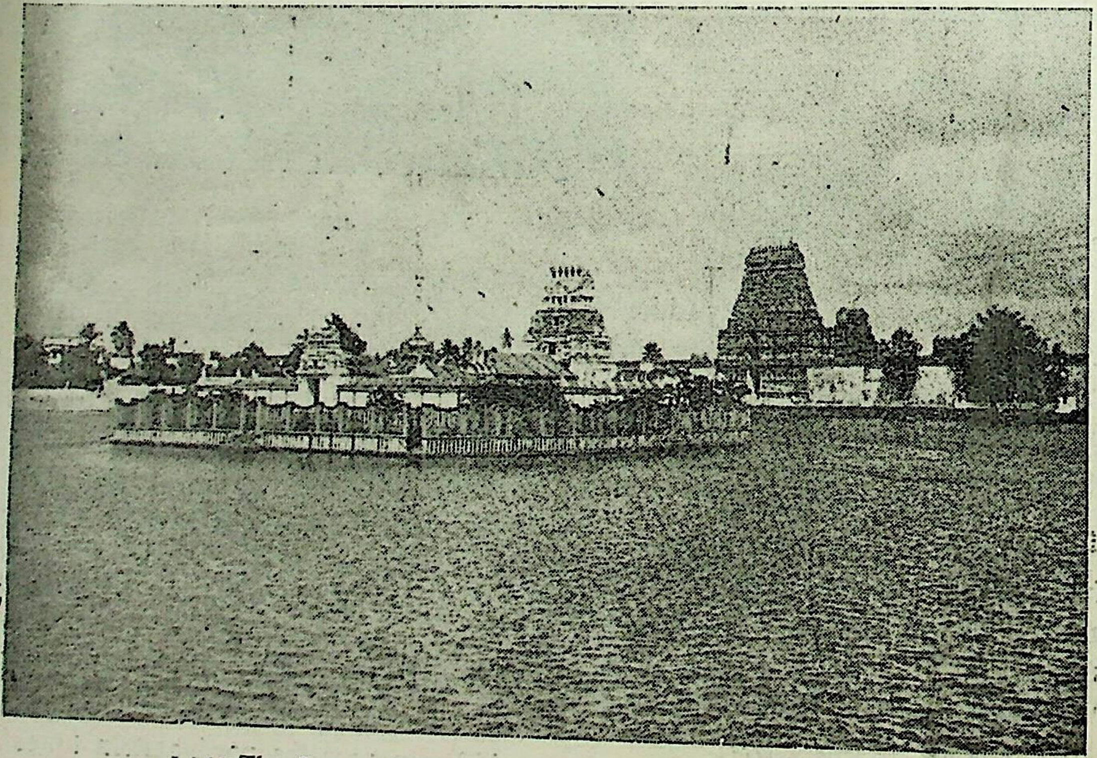
The story goes that an *araychi mani* (bell) was kept in front of the royal palace and people were allowed to ring this bell whenever they desired to put forth their grievances before their king. One day, the crown prince drove his chariot on a calf and the distressed cow brought the emperor to the scene in a strange way by ringing the bell. To redress the remorseful animal, the emperor also decided to suffer the loss of his only son in a similar way and drove his stately carriage on his son. His admirable justice brought the Lord to restore the lives of the calf and the prince. The sculptural representation of the chariot with the prince at its wheel and the cow with its demised kid seen near the north-eastern tower (*Vitta-*

vāsal gopuram) of the temple illustrate the legend; and the image of the cow is wonderful for its fusion of the pathetic feeling with greater eloquence. This event has also been recorded in the inscription of the Chola king, Vikrama Chola (A.D. 1123) found in the temple. The temple also contains a large number of inscriptions of the Chola kings, Raja Raja and Rajendra as well as some records of the later rulers of this dynasty and the Pandyas and the Thanjavur Nayak Ruler Achutappa Nayak and the Maharashtra king Raja Sarfoji.

The celebrated temple is one of the largest temples in India and covers an area of about 35 acres. It stands in the heart of the city and possesses seven stately towers, amongst which the western tower provides a feast to the eyes with its extremely beautiful figures representing scenes from Hindu mythology. In front of this tower, lies the holy tank 'Kamalalaya Theertham' and in its centre rises a splendid island temple dedicated to God Naduvananather. This large tank has sixty-four bathing ghats with graceful mandapams where the accruing merits of a dip in the respective bathing ghats are detailed on the walls.

The temple has three spacious *prākāran* containing a great number of shrines wi hoary traditions. The shrine of the powerf Goddess Kamalambikai Amman is placed the north western corner of the third *prākāra* and in it this deity is sculptured in a meditati posture. The sculptures of the *Dwārapālaka* Shunmugar and Saraswathi in this shrine a notable for their delicate workmanship an the most interesting spot is *Akshara Peeṭha* (immutable throne) where only the Peeṭha (throne) and the *Tiruvachi* (hook) are e shrined. It is said that in the Tiruvachi a inscribed the sacred fifty-one letters of Śak Mantra. The absence of the image on t Peeṭham and the presence of these letters illu trate that the Divine Mother possesses no def nite form and is immanent in every sour which usually comes in the form of one other letter. The Pooram Festival celebrat in honour of this deity in the Tamil month Ādi (July-August) is one of the grand fest vals in South India and draws large crowds pilgrims.

In this third prākāram is also seen t beautiful image of Śiva's bull, Brahma Nand which is said to possess certain miraculo



The Sacred Kamalalaya Theertham at Tiruvarur powers. It is believed that the filling of the pit surrounding this bull with water would fetch rain instantaneously and the feeding of the cows with the *kusa* grass (*Arugampul*) used in the worship of this deity would make them give more milk than usual. Amongst the hundreds of shrines beautifying the second prākāram, those of the Goddess Alliyankothai and Viswakarmeswarar deserve keen attention. In the shrine of Alliyankothai, the Goddess is beautifully sculptured in such a way as to bless the infant Skanda who is carried by a divine damsel. Such figures of great elegance are seldom met with elsewhere. The shrine of Viswakarmeswarar is a store house of rich sculptures. The representations of wooden constructional features such as rafters, and eaves in stone exhibit the marvellous skill of the Indian sculptors and make everyone gape in silent wonder.

In the group of shrines adorning the first prākāram surrounding the sanctum, those of Chandraśekar, Ranavimocaneswar and Navagrahas are interesting. In the shrine of Chandraśekar, the sculptures depicting the scene of worship offered to Lord Thiagaraja by Lord Viṣṇu and Lord Indra are marvels of elaboration. The worship of Ranavimocaneswar is said to obtain relief from all diseases and difficulties. Usually in almost all the shrines, the Navagrahas are represented to face different directions but here they are depicted to face towards one and the same direction and this rare darśan is considered to give many benefits to the devotees.

The sanctum has two shrines — one dedicated to Lord Valmikanathar and the other to Lord Thiagaraja in the representation of Somaskanda (Śiva and Śakti seated on both sides with infant Skanda in their midst). In the shrine of Lord Thiagaraja, the deities are placed on a diamond studded throne with two precious swords on both sides and it is interpreted that from here the Lord rules over the entire universe with his boundless love and the karmas of his devotees are scattered by the swords. Legend has it that the sacred idol of Lord Thiagaraja was primarily worshipped by Lord Viṣṇu and then handed over to Lord Indra. When the Chola Emperor Muchukunda helped Indra to overthrow the yoke placed on the latter by a demon, he demanded the image of Lord Thiagaraja as his reward. Indra was first reluctant to part with it and hence presented six similar idols, all of which were said to have been installed in six sacred places [Tirunallar, Tirunagaikaronam (Nagapattinam), Tirukkaroil, Tirukkolili, Tiruvoymur and Tirumaraikkadu (Vedaranyam)] in the Chola country. Finally, the real one was obtained at the instance of the Lord and was established by the Chola emperor at Tiruvarur. The sculptural representations and paintings in the temple describe this legend and even to this day, the priest disguises himself as a king with costly dress and conducts the daily worship with elaborate rituals to perpetuate the memory of the puja performed by Indra. It is believed that on the Full Moon day of the Tamil month Purattasi (October) every year, Lord Indra visits this place to perform his worship and to commemorate this, a grand festival is celebrated with elaborate rituals and draws a great influx of devotees from all the neighbouring districts. This festival is familiarly known as 'Niraipaniutsavam'.

Tiruvarur literally means the sacred place where Goddess Lakshmi (Goddess of Wealth) engaged in rigorous penance and married Lord Viṣṇu by the grace of Lord Valmikanathar. This place is also frequently referred to as Kamalalayapuram (City of the Lotus temple) and from the layout of the temple it can be seen that the sanctum stands in the position of the central part of the full blown lotus flower and the innumerable surrounding shrines are arranged like its petals. The car (Ratham) of this temple has a fame for its excellent workmanship occasioning the popular saying 'The beauty of the Car of Tiruvarur is matchless and can never be compared with anything else than its own splendour.'

UNIVERSAL EDUCATION

(Continued from the previous issue)

BR. VIDYA CHAITANYA

III

Swami Vivekananda's ideas are truly universal

We shall now divert our attention to the universal education as adumbrated by Swami Vivekananda. There is a consensus of opinion that the sublime ideals of education that Swami Vivekananda gave us through his speeches and writings are only meant for Indians; and that, seeing the Indian masses in a miserable plight both economically and intellectually, Swami Vivekananda's heart bled for them and he poured out a few exalted suggestions for educating the masses which he considered to be of basic importance for the Indian youths. Of course, the idea does not appear to be mistaken when one who goes through the works of Swami Vivekananda sees in his speeches, the high tone of passion and love for the Indians. But very few care to recognise the patent fact that Swami Vivekananda had a message for the world — that his suggestions and constructive appeals for the amelioration of India had also a universal value, to be applied to all other countries and nations, that the dreams he had in his mind had a far-reaching outer application in the external world. Unlike other mere social reformers or patriots of India, who spoke and tried during the best part of their lives for the uplift of the Indian masses, Swami Vivekananda's appeal had this distinction that, though by birth and education he was an Indian, his thinking was on a universal plane. He was truly a world citizen; nay, he was a divine messenger coming down, from the celestial realm through his infinite grace, to the earth to put her on the right spiritual track. He looked upon the people of India not as mere Indians but as a part of humanity, as a partner in the entire world considered as a nation. No doubt some of his ideas are specially meant for the Indian masses, no doubt his life was a determined move to eliminate the so-called mal-adjustments in the country and see her occupy a place of honour in the comity of civilized nations; but we should not forget that he judged a country or a nation — not from the point of view of her geographical location or of her religion — by the individuals who comprised the nation. His deep and penetrating insight always tried to have a vision of the inner worth of man. He judged the merit of individuals irrespective of their sectarian and provincial bias. That is why his constructive suggestion for the uplift of India though appears to be truly Indian in character and singularly meant for the Indian masses has also a universal appeal — an appeal which tries to dissociate the ideal from the real and place it like a pole star as an object of pursuit in the life of a man.

Grounds for Universal Education

This universal tone of Swami Vivekananda's teachings in the field of education is equally authoritative like that of the universal conception of religion, which he considered to be based on Vedānta, for which he adduced enough reasons. The educational ideal of Swami Vivekananda is universal. For, first of all, the goal of education which aims at the 'manifestation of the perfection already in man' is the same as that preached by the Vedanta, the religion which purports to manifest the divinity already in man. Secondly man's life consists in ascending gradually in the hierarchy of ideas and ends ultimately in the attainment of the highest ideal. Educational principles help individuals in supplying the ideal and upgrading him through various channels which are suited to the different members of society, caste and religion. Swami Vivekananda's educational principles have presented us with such ideals which afford ample scope for the full manifestation of the latent qualities of head and heart and eventually enable us to rise to the full stature of our spiritual being. Just as Vedantic spiritual ideas have got their validity for all time on earth, similarly Swami Vivekananda's educational principles will remain unaltered so long there will be man on earth.

Vedanta is based upon principles and not upon personalities, and it is the spiritual principles which guide mankind to its destiny. Similarly, we can venture to add that the educational ideas and implications which Swami Vivekananda has preached with his prophetic insight are based upon the rocky foundations of spirituality[1] i.e., he did not view education as possessing a value completely different from that of religion. These two did not appear to him to possess different objectives leading men to different goals. Rather one is the fulfilment of the other. Without spiritual ideas or goal as their background, educational principles and undertakings are empty ; whereas without the educational processes through which man rises to higher and higher states spiritual ideas are not of any practical value ; i.e., spiritual ideas are to be practised in and through educational methods and processes.

Objections considered

Here we are confronted with the greatest obstacle. If educational devices must have a spiritual foundation, the conclusion which we have reached in the last paragraph, then what is the utility or ideological fruition of the different methods of education that are put into practice in different countries specially in the Western hemisphere ? Secondly, are these methods absolutely meaningless in the light of the proposed ideal which is truly Vedantic ? In reply to these questions, we want to draw attention to our observations in the beginning of this article where the two-fold educational values have been clearly formulated. Education that makes man fit by supplying both material and intellectual benefits as is seen in most of the countries may seem to be devoid of any spiritual value but the imperceptible foundation which it helps to lay in the minds of the individuals by means of its practical application possesses also a spiritual value. This rocky shell of material experience must be pierced through in order to dive deep into the perennial spring of spiritual life.

Until and unless man's mind is in sympathy with the earthly experiences (misery) of mankind, he cannot be a better spiritual man. In fact this is a new light in the field of spirituality brought into focus by the nineteenth century religious movements with the practical illustrations embodied in the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. That is why in the religious field it is seen that spiritual giants become vastly experienced in the affairs of the world also. Their scope or spatial world of experience might be very limited ; but living within the small physical range as opposed to the spiritual which is wide and vast, they get a view of the total conception of man and the world at large. So education — which is a means of sharpening the edges of the different faculties of man to enable him to be a worthy member in socio-religious field — is a stepping-stone towards religious progress if ideals and regulations are properly attended to. The validity of this utterance may not be proved in one single life of the individual ; but taking into consideration the storage of Karma that is destined to bear fruit, we can say that experiences are the direct aids to the accumulation of Karma enjoyed in one's life. And the sooner the fund of Karma will be exhausted the speedier will be manifested the inner divinity. The regulations that will be discussed later on have a great bearing on this point. It is these regulations which can transform any system of education and spiritualize its objective. So it can be concluded that far from being antagonistic, the different educational undertakings are helpful in this regard, however round-about they might be.

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[1] "I look upon religion as the innermost core of education." —(*Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, Vol. V. p. 231).

IV

Definition of Universal Education

Spirituality — the very foundation

Regarding educational ideas of Swami Vivekananda we do not feel it necessary to enter into details on account of their wide-spread circulation and much earned popularity among all. However, the ideas which bear great significance in their being truly universal in character will be dealt with in the following lines. The very definition of education as given by Swami Vivekananda is based upon spiritual foundation. 'Education', Swami Vivekananda says, 'is the manifestation of the perfection already in man.'[2] Now the question arises, what is it that is in man which is of the nature of perfection? It is the all-pervading spirit or *chaitanya* which is the true nature of all beings. The definition also implies that man is essentially a perfect and all-knowing, self-poised being.[3] But he appears to have lost his perfection. Now education as a means of removing the impediments in the way of man's realization of the fullness of being, has been extolled as directly connected with the performance of this supreme task.[4] And what we call man's attaining higher and higher ideas in the progressive stages of education is more or less nothing but the revelation of the all-knowing and all-pervading spirit through different mediums.[5] Just as spiritual practices do not substantially add to the fullness of being which man possesses, so also different educational cultures do not add any-thing new to the fullness of perfection which is already in man.[6]

Development of faculty

In another discussion on education, Swami Vivekananda describes it 'as the developmen of faculty, not an accumulation of words or as a training of individuals to will rightly and efficiently.'[7] It has been emphasized previously that a system of education which helps individuals only in fact-finding and fact-swallowing without however aiding them to increase their abilities in different fields of work whether intellectual, moral or physical, serves ver little purpose in their all-round growth. It i doubtful whether any country possesses a system of education where emphasis is laid mor upon the development of faculties than upo the age-old methods of dealing with facts an figures.

Truly speaking, man becomes conscious o the real value of these qualities after passin through storms and stresses of life. Then onl he becomes mindful of the ideal of life an his position in the socio-religious field. Th first and foremost sign of a man's progress i the spiritually educated life is proved by th fact that his senses will be indrawn, mind wi be sharp, alert and watchful in all matter and his activities will receive prominenc among others. That person who has thu trained his mind together with his facultie will no more allow his energy or ment vigour to be frittered away.

Due to the integration of emotions and ideas mind becomes active in its totality and wh it wills is coherent, powerful and steady. I him all the conflicts and confusions of th ideals are gone, for he has a cultivated, inte rated and unified will whose primary value is conviction. It is easily distinguishable from wish or desire in which there is uncertainty, lack of conviction and power. So, what is mostly needed for the development of will is calmness or balanced state of mind, and conviction. The difference between a man of common education and that of spiritually trained one is this, that while in the case of the former it is the mind which engages itself in multifarious unnecessary and superfluous matters, in the case of the latter, the inner self controls the mind in its dealings with the outer world; and helps it penetrate through all matters and see their pros and cons. This alertness of the mind, this extraordinary way of looking deep into facts and figures and revealing the inner folds has been reckoned as the criteria of a spiritually trained man. Of course it is not a monopoly of any being but the more a man will cultivate these trends of the mind, the more he will rise above the material plane. Huxley in his definition of education has laid stress upon non-attachment,[8] the value of which in the spiritual field is immense. Of course, he has referred to it in another context but our point is that a trained man becomes truly non-attached. He has no attachment for any external things and beings and is capable of brushing aside any mental state which is purposeless. Thus that man resorts only to the essential, keeps away from the unnecessary and maintains mental tranquillity in all respects.

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[2] *Letters of Swami Vivekananda,* Fourth edition p. 90.

[3] "All knowledge therefore secular or spiritual, is in the human mind". (*C.W.S.V.*, Vol. I, p. 26).

[4] "The man from whom this veil is being lifted is the more knowing man." (*ibid.*).

[5] "Man manifests knowledge, discovers it within himself, which is pre-existing through eternity." (*ibid.*, p. 421).

[6] "What you can do is not of a positive natu but negative. You can take away the obstacles, an knowledge comes out of its own nature." (*C.W.S.* Vol. IV, p. 52).

[7] Another definition runs thus, "The training which the current and expression of will are brou under control and become fruitful is called edu tion." (*C.W.S.V.*, Vol. V, p. 231).

Characteristics of Universal Education — Character-building

Education has now-a-days been used as an equipment to make oneself eligible for securing position in the socio-political field; its scope has been kept limited to the sphere of book-learning or at least gathering information of the different branches of science, and nothing more than that.[9] But the present trend of human civilization calls for the necessity of a higher type of education. Education has a very important role: to enter into the inner chambers of the human mind and mould or adjust the ideas in accordance with the precepts or doctrines as taught by the sages and savants of mankind and raise one gradually towards the fulfilment of the ideal. This moulding of inner life — the shaping of the different faculties of the human mind together with directing the brain power or intelligence towards the desired end without losing one's individuality or man's uniqueness — is a factor which the universal education theory urgently calls for. Universal education sounds a clarion call to us to shed the egoistic feeling, or sacrifice it to the greater ego or 'I' which has its seat in mankind as a whole.

One of the greatest features of this all-encompassing education, as has been pointed out by Swami Vivekananda in one of his letters is 'Character-building'.[10] Character is the sum total of the bent of the human mind. It is a vital aspect of the individual which is held in high esteem in the evolution of human civilization. Indeed, it is very difficult to pick out the actual elements constituting the whole, called character. Now, there are some pertinent questions relating to this. What are the means of manifesting character? Is character something simple or complex? Is it capable of exercising any influence upon others? And whether it is exhausted in the behaviour of the individual?

Meaning of Character-building Education

Normally human life consists in experience which is nothing but the adjustment, in some way or other, of the finer elements of the individual called mental with the grosser objects of the world called matter. Adjustment is preceded by reaction, and a subsequent change in the elements both physical and mental ensues. The subject or the individual is constituted of elements called 'dispositions' which means 'any enduring part of the structure of the mind which renders possible some particular mode of mental activity.'[11] Structure of the mind, according to psychologists like Mcdougall is distinguished by two aspects, i.e. 'intellect' and 'character'. Though intimately related they are relatively distinct organisations. To one 'intellect may be highly developed and well organised though his character may be poor, ill-organised and unstable.' And the reverse may be found where 'Character may be organised though his intellect remains comparatively undeveloped.'[12]

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[8] Ends and Means, chapter, *Education*, pp. 219-20.

[9] The contrast is to be marked with the following "Education is not the amount of information that is put into your brain and runs riot there." (*C.W.S.V.*, Vol. III, p. 302, 8th Ed.).

[10] *Letters of Swami Vivekananda*, 4th Edition, p. 412.

While analysing the growth of mental structure, Prof. Mcdougall has laid special emphasis on functions of knowing and striving. He writes, 'The ways in which the faculties of knowing and striving are exercised are determined by the dispositions; the cognitive dispositions determine the contents of our knowing, the conative dispositions the form of our striving.'[13] But how is man's striving led? Prof. Mcdougall says that it is driven by desires or 'conative tendencies of our *instincts*'. The organized system of these *tendencies, directed upon a variety of objects and toward the realization of various goals connected with these objects* constitutes what is called character. Character is the system of directed conative tendencies. It may be relatively simple or complex; it may be harmoniously organized or lacking in harmony; it may be firmly or loosely knit; it may be directed in the main toward lower or toward higher goals. Character of the finest type is that which is complex, strongly and harmoniously organized, and directed toward the realization of higher goals or ideals. But the better organized and richer the intellect, the more efficiently will character work toward the realization of its goals.[14]

From the above few lines we get new light on the most vital aspect of our life called character. Character is thus not a matter of external show apart from regulated tendencies of an individual[15] but it is revealed in a through them. It is capable of influenci others and converting the bad tendencies in good one and the good to bad. A because it is the product of all good and b tendencies working together in man and abstract in nature, it does not get exhausted the behaviour of the individual. But t quality of character is variable due to t variation of mental ideas. The more t moulding of ideas into good direction the mo refined will be his character. Characte though changeable, has got its permane substratum in the mental constitution of t individual. Man is urged to make a hap combination of head, heart and spirit. A one failing to do it is considered to be inelig ble for spiritual progress. Because full dev lopment of spirit will be realized when other aspects will be made perfect. With t growth of them follow the necessary qualit i.e., wisdom gives one humility, broadness heart gives rise to fellow-feeling, toleran and selflessness. These virtues are all spi tual in character i.e., on the appearance of a one of these qualities, it must be understo that the aspirant is progressing toward spirit realization. But that education which distin ly unfolds in one these divine qualities l holiness, truthfulness, heroism, patience, s cerity, simplicity, broad-mindedness, intell ence etc., by giving rise to a full-bloom character is truly universal in nature a serves the real spiritual purpose. While Swa Vivekananda was uttering that education m bring into one's life a sound and p fect character he had in his mind the abo spiritual qualities which should find a livi manifestation in life and behaviour. Th such a living character can exercise treme dous influence over all and conquer the wo is expressed in beautiful language by Swa Vivekananda in one of his letters: 'Neith money pays, nor name, nor fame, nor lea ing, it is character that can cleave throu adamantine walls of difficulties.'[16] Education that fails to achieve this end is not worthy of the name it possesses. Man's life passes from lower and lesser truths to higher and more genuine truths and the more he grows in experience, the more he becomes mindful of acquiring spiritual qualities. And universal education gives each and every one a scope for the fulfilment of his inner abilities —to be really divine in this material world.

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[11] *An outline of Psychology* by Mcdougall, p. 378.

[12] *Ibid.*

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 417.

[15] "The character of any man is but the aggre of his tendencies, the sum total of the bent of mind." (C.W.S.V., Vol. I, p. 27, 10th Edition.)

Man-making Education

The second characteristic of universal education as mentioned by Swami Vivekananda is the idea of 'man-making'.[17] We have discussed in the previous paragraphs that the true aim of education is character-building i.e., to make manifest those qualities and virtues which go to form an ideal and fiery character. Our point in the present context is to lay stress upon the blooming of manly qualities together with an impressive, well-reckoned and strong personality. A well-known psychologist defines personality as the 'total quality of an individual's behaviour.'[18] Personality is such a term which can be described by many adjectives in a roundabout way but what it actually is, is a matter more to be felt than to be pointed out. While telling about personality one may conscientiously reply that the candidate possesses 'a pleasing yet forceful personality, that he is energetic and persistent, but cheerful and even-tempered.'[19]

Psychologists have come to be acquainted with a man's personality with the help of traits which are some particular qualities of behaviour such as cheerfulness, self-reliance, peevishness, dependence, etc. These varieties in the individuals are changeable. Personality is a synthetic whole of the different traits. Among other things universal education develops in an individual the qualities which distinctly go to make him a man of action and ability, i.e., it produces manly qualities. Nowadays much is talked about man's life and its value. An individual can no longer be called a man in the true sense of the term. We call him man who has become conscious about man-hood, who is firm in resolve and in his undertakings, who has got a strong will that is never swayed by public prattle. True education arouses self-reliance which is the basic factor in spiritual life because a man of spirituality is first and foremost a man of determination. Education has brought in him confidence and self-respect and as such he is strong and firm in his actions. He does not lead a purposeless life. On the other hand, as a means to fulfil his mission he does not hesitate to jump into thorny courses of life. He is not a man of mere imagination but a practical one also. Education that he receives produces a moral and intellectual background as a result of which he is able to stand erect and courageously face the dangers that beset the path. It creates in him a struggling and conquering spirit and not a peevish and defeatist mentality.[20] Societies are nowadays being moulded in various ways, man's aims and aspirations are doubling day by day but unless these manly qualities be developed, man may not be worthy of the name. Swamiji himself was the concrete embodiment of all the qualities mentioned above and he realized in his heart of hearts that unless these qualities are cultivated through an educational curriculum, man cannot be a victor in his struggle against odds.

Regulations necessary for Universal Education

We shall bring the present discussion to a close by mentioning the necessary regulations which Swami Vivekananda wanted to introduce and to be observed by students as a part and parcel of their education. It goes without saying that according to Swami Vivekananda a pure and religious life is the foundation of all education and culture. As such that which is essential in religious life is to be first taken care of. Swami Vivekananda laid utmost emphasis on chaste and continent life[21] which is the source of strength, vigour, energy, and was of opinion that a pure and perfect educational career requires as much a chaste life as a religious life does. The reason is not far to seek. He visualized the far reaching consequences of education and as such the regulations that he introduced were two-fold with respect to two distinct but correlated necessities. First, it directly helps education by supplying a strong and sharp brain power required for grasping and memorizing different subjects of study. Secondly, it implicitly lays the foundation of a future spiritual life which has been considered as the goal of education.

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[16] *Letters of Swami Vivekananda,* p. 190, 4th Edn.
[17] *C.W.S.V.,* Vol. III, Eighth edn., p. 302.
[18] *Psychology* by Stout, p. 134.
[19] *Ibid.*

[20] "Education that does not help the common mass to equip themselves for the struggle for life... is it worth the name?" (*C.W.S.V.,* Vol. VII, 5th edn., p. 147).

Apart from this Swami Vivekananda stressed the need of cultivating power of concentration.[22] What is said to be the difference between one student and another, between man and man is due to the difference of power of concentration. The more a mind is concentrated the more it is able to grasp quickly and with greater depth matters intellectual. A student of medicine who strictly adheres to the above two, excels others not only as a student but also in character and as such he is able to understand the higher value of education and in many cases pays more attention to it. Thus even being a member of general academic line, he becomes increasingly bent towards the higher and more sublime type of education. A secular education has no quarrel with spirituality. Swami Vivekananda wanted that in all schools of education, observance of celibate life ar practice of concentration should be compu sorily introduced. As a result of this th students will be adepts in their respective lin of study and secondly, will understand ar appreciate the aims of education and lif Imbued with the fiery ideas concerned wi deeper meaning of life they will realize th value of renunciation and will not hesitate t sacrifice their profession and life for a great and nobler cause. So what is nowadays calle to be the narrow aim and outlook of educatio can easily be elevated to its higher level wi the help of the above two regulations. Wi these two sparks infused into the education line it can be spiritualized and it is Swa Vivekananda who made us conscious abo the spiritual value of education. Tod different countries are realizing the necess of spiritual goal of education and with a vie to accomplishing this great task the leade are thinking of introducing religious trainin in all schools of education. Of course t necessity is felt more due to the growing d orderly tendency among the students ; all the result from the lack of rational approach t human life and educational ideal. And t greater they face these social diseases, t more they shall have to take to this noble a all-embracing ideal of education and app ciate the depth and significance of the p phetic utterances which Swami Vivekanan made more than sixty years ago. The cannot be a greater homage to Swami Vivek nanda than implementing his ideas and putti them into practice. We shall be consider his worthy followers when our lives a dedicated to that great cause.

(Concluded)

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[21] *C.W.S.V.*, Vol. VII, 5th edn., p. 224.

[22] "The very essence of education is concentration of mind." (*C.W.S.V.*, Vol. VI, p. 36).

Loosen the soil a little, so that it (the plant) may come out easily. Put a hedge round it; see that it is not killed by anything, and there your work stops. You cannot do anything else. The rest is a manifestation from within its own nature. So with the education of a child; a child educates itself. You come to hear me, and when you go home, compare what you have learned, and you will find you have thought out the same thing; I have only given it expression. I can never teach you anything: you will have to teach yourself, but I can help you perhaps in giving expression to that thought.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(Latu Maharaj)

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

Chapter IX

We have seen in the last chapter how the Master initiated Latu in the virtue of bowing down (to all and sundry). Along with it he taught him the true spirit of service. One day the Master told Latu Maharaj, 'Mind you, Latu, don't be led away by the exterior. By serving this body, a set of bones and flesh, you will not profit. But if you serve the one residing within it, you would get everything.'

What 'servant' Latu said on that occasion we came to know from Senior Gopalda (Swami Advaitananda *). We give below *verbatim* what the latter narrated to us; only those portions put within brackets are ours:

Latu: 'Who is there within it? I don't know.'

Master: 'The Lord is within it! It is Śiva who, as Jiva, lives within the body.'

At this Latu kept quiet. Then, as if with greater emphasis, the Master said, 'Latu dear, look here, don't forget him (pointing towards his heart). Would you be able to obey him implicitly? Never, never forget him.' Hearing this a strange change came over Latu Maharaj. With folded hands he lisped out, 'You love me so much, you show so much kindness to me; is it possible for me to forget you? If I do not obey you it would be a blatant act of ingratitude. I would, without questioning, carry out all your orders. I can never forget you.'

Master (smiling): 'I am not referring to my words, but of the words from "here" (pointing to his heart).'

Latu replied 'I do not know anything of "here". Kindly explain it to me.' Hearing these words of Latu, the Master turned towards Senior Gopalda and said, 'Gopal, just hear what Latu says. He says, "Explain the words 'of here'." Is it possible to explain the words "of here"? Just tell me, is it possible? What a strange importuning is this!'

(At this serio-comic act of the Master) Gopalda said, 'Why, That is known to you. Why should you not reveal it?'

(At this) the Master, (as if embarrassed) said, 'How strange do you talk! The nature of "here" — should it be revealed?'

(Senior Gopalda, undefeated, replied) 'We have gathered round you only for this — to know what is this "here". If you keep it a secret from us how are we to know?'

Master (smiling): 'Not now, not now. The "here" is not to be made known now. When the time will come all of you shall know it.'

It is not quite clear why the Master bound down Latu with the promise of absolute obedience even before initiating him into the practice of divine service. We presume, however, that in this practice the guidance of a *guru* is essential and that if the disciple fails to obey the guru implicitly, the efficacy of the method is nullified. Hence Sri Ramakrishna got him to promise obedience at the outset. The Master used to say, 'The best guru is he who, finding the disciple slack or unwilling to carry out the instructions, even uses force and extorts obedience.'

A *guru* is necessary in all spiritual practices, more so in that of divine service. It needs no repetition. A spiritual novice, dedicated to the service of the Lord through work, without the aid of an expert guide is like a boat without a rudder; the boat goes on being tossed and buffeted by the waves and driven whithersoever the wind takes it. The novice fares the same fate in the ocean of numerous works;

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* A direct monastic disciple of Sri Ramakrishna.

he loses sight of the end, viz. realization of God, the life divine. In works, philanthropic or other, there is a sort of intoxication; it makes man mad; he forgets the goal. Activities create an impetus, a rage, which takes man off his feet. He gets tired, entangled and restless. Sri Ramakrishna saw that Latu was a *sattvika*, that he had a good measure of longing for the Lord. He did not want to throw the boy into a vortex of activities in his unripened stage. Hence was the warning, 'See, my boy, you do not forget the "here".'

Latu, a true servant of Sri Ramakrishna that he was, remained, throughout his life, true to the letter of his promise. Not a day passed with Latu when he forgot the Master, not a day when he transgressed his injunctions; not for a moment was he ungrateful to the Master. It was so, not only at Dakshineswar, not only during the Master's lifetime; but long after Sri Ramakrishna's passing away, Latu had that one idea, one inspiration, one aim — to follow the Master *implicitly*, not to forget him even for a moment.

Thus getting a promise from Latu not to forget him, the Master made an indelible impression on the former's mind that the Lord's servants should not forget the Lord even for a moment. Latu lived the life, ever in remembrance of God; but the Master kept the secret of his identity to himself — he did not let Latu know that the Master was That. Still he gave sufficient hint that if he did not give the Master up he would reach God. The Lord's servant, Latu, started his spiritual practices with the fullest reliance and dependence on the Master and remained steadfast in it to the last. His steadfastness was so thorough and wonderful that in later days his *gurubhais*, brother-disciples especially Narendranath (Swami Vivekananda) said, 'Of all of us Latu alone has truly caught hold of our Master, we are simply echoing his words.'

We would never have understood that it was ever possible for a man to surrender and depend on another so absolutely had we not seen Latu Maharaj actually doing it before our very eyes. It is easier for a man t sacrifice his life for another — that is but single act in life — than to completely wip out one's individuality and merge himself another and continue to pass the whole li in and for the other. It is indeed an extra ordinary phenomenon, unparalleled in spir tual history.

* * *

Since the day Latu Maharaj was admitte into the service of Sri Ramakrishna this ide that he had no other go but to depend whol and solely on the Master became deeply in pressed on his mind. He got this deep in pression even before he stepped into you in his adolescence, as a result of which h inner conflicts were at a low ebb all the tim and his egotism, that he could achieve an thing by dint of personal efforts, was wip off fully. Generally we depend for our pr gress and welfare on the exercise of our ow understanding, hence our aspirations are ci cumscribed by the expanse and orientation our reason. Naturally we cannot rise abo that. If the outlook is changed and the unde standing widens our aspiration also becom vast. The common man, hard pressed worldly needs, deliberately narrows down circumference of his intellect, makes the an of his vision more acute. But those who generous in outlook and are detached, w have not allowed themselves to be bound do to worldly needs can very easily enlarge a deepen their intellect and consequently th aspirations are raised higher, are made cover wider areas. At the fag end of adolescence when Latu Maharaj was going be initiated into the life of divine service too, like all others, had to face the proble whether he was to be guided in life by own intellect or by another intellect shar and universal. Had he been one like us, pro of our own powers and intellect, it would ha been difficult for him to opt for what he d

But Latu was different — he was illiter and emotional, which made it easy for him choose the path of self-surrender, thereby save himself from being overwhelmed by in conflicts. All the educated devotees of the Master, whether of the inner circle or outer, accepted the Master after having passed through a period of conflicting doubts. They, all of them without exception, tested him on the touchstone of their intellect, some going so far as to declare him to be a mono-maniac. What is so striking with Latu is that the thought of testing the Master never crossed his mind. Whatever he told Latu, the disciple believed fully, whatever he was asked to do he did without a question. Like a child to its father, Latu resigned himself completely to the Master and enjoyed a calm that is denied to others.

(*To be continued*)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

'Prasthana Traya and its Background', is the third instalment of the serial by Swami Vimalananda, President, Sri Ramakrishna Advaita Ashrama, Kalady.

Swami Vijnanananda is from the Ramakrishna Order. In a short compass he has brought out 'the life and message of Swami Vivekananda' in a forceful manner.

Brahmachari Sudhangsu is from the Ramakrishna Order.

Sri N. K. Krishnamurti is from Madras.

Sri N. Padmanabhan is from Madurai.

'Universal Education' by Brahmachari Vidya Chaitanya, of the Ramakrishna Order is the second and concluding part of his article.

LET US LEARN TO THINK

India has been independent for more than a decade and a half now, still our ways and modes of thinking have not become independent. That initiative to manifest the creative and critical faculties is still lacking in us. The slavish mentality of looking to the West for approval in matters which concern even our daily life has not left us. It is more so in the case of religion, manners and customs. We see through their eyes, and we learn through their tongue. We assess the value of our scriptures too through the views of people not brought up in the tradition and who judge everything from their own standard and whatever anyone of them writes whether it is derogatory, unhelpful or harmful to us, we do not stop to think, but swallow it lock, stock and barrel. And there have been some journals in India who specially take interest in condemning everything indigenous and never lose an opportunity to laud to the skies the books that speak ill of our customs, ways of living and the like. They even surpass the comments in the books in their vindictive criticism and recommend such books as the holy manna.

Our ultra-rationalists may then ask 'Are we to swallow whatever is dictated to us by old, out-moded scriptures?' Far from that. What we ask is to cultivate the God-given faculty of discrimination. Rationalism does not mean throwing over-board whatever smacks of antiquity, and taking in whatever smells of modernism. Throw away the dross by all means but first try to learn what is dross and what is gold. We do not throw away gold simply because it is old. The patterns of ornaments may be renewed but we use the same old gold for them.

Again all of those who would advise us through their literature, how wrong we are, do not do so with a well-meant intention. They have always some axe of their own to grind. It is not given to a casual observer to know everything of India, neither to know what is good for it regarding its own religion; nor a few years stay spent in religious hitch-hiking in India does make a man an authority on Indian tradition regarding spirituality. In spiritual matters life of the man, character as we term it, is more important than his scholarship. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'I consider a scholar, without discrimination and dispassion as mere straw.' Again he said 'One does not get intoxicated if only one utters siddhi! Siddhi! One should prepare it and drink it, then only will one get intoxicated.'

Swami Vivekananda exhorted, 'Any mad man may come into this room and say he sees angels around him, that would be not proof. In the first place, it must be true knowledge, and secondly, it must not contradict past knowledge, and thirdly, it must depend upon the character of the man who gives it out. I hear it said that the character of the man is not of so much importance as what he may say; we must first hear what he says. This may be true in other things. A man may be wicked, and yet make an astronomical discovery, but in religion it is different, because no impure man will ever have the power to reach the truths of religion. Therefore, we have first of all to see that the man who declares himself to be an Āpta is a perfectly unselfish and holy person; secondly, that he has reached beyond the senses; and thirdly, that what he says does not contradict the past knowledge of humanity. Any new discovery of truth does not contradict the past truth, but fits into it. And fourthly, that truth must have a possibility of verification.'

Now have those, who commend books which speak ill of our religion, term it to be all rot, ever cared to look into the character, antecedents and precedents of these writers? Have they ever cared to know how that man lives his life in the present? And yet they call themselves rationalistic! All their rationalism has, perhaps, been exhausted nay evaporated in discarding, without consideri their own heritage. Our scriptures were n the ravings of mad men as some of the moder orientalists like to present to us. They wer immaculate characters and their sayings ha been tested and verified by thousands, if n millions, of people in their lives. Shall w give these things up merely because some on without any of these abovesaid credentials has said them to be bad? Can not this fac that many in the West do find solace i Vedanta or come to know of their own scriptures, in the light of Vedanta, better, mak these self-styled pundits and advocates o modernism pause and perceive what is basically wrong with their thinking?

Let those who are bent on distorting th meaning of our scriptures and applaudin everything not indigenous, mend their way or not. But let us beware of such wiseacres, who ask us to discard our heritage sententiously and take in whatever comes fro the West, even regarding our religion, withou a thought. Let us learn to think, to b genuinely serious about religion and practis the disciplines if at all we wish to commen Then and then alone man will come to kno how hollow are the theories of the moderne and how rich is our own heritage.

Regarding rationality, if there are any scriptures in the world which ask us to questio their veracity and satisfy ourselves befo accepting them, they are the scriptures of th Hindu. 'Know that by prostration, *questio ing* and service', says the Gita. Our preceptors never demanded implicit obedience fro genuine disciples. Sri Ramakrishna is a mos illustrious example of such a wide outloo He allowed his disciples to test him in eve way before accepting him as their teache In rationality too, therefore, we are not behin any race. Let us not discard things as ou moded because they are ancient. Let cogitate before we embark on the eliminatio process.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

CLASSICS ON LOGIC: Readings in Epistemology, Theory of Knowledge and Dialectics. Edited by Dagobert D. Runes. Philosophical Library, 15 East 40th Street, New York-16, N. Y. Price $ 10.00; Pp. 818+xiv.

D. D. Runes is a name well-known to every student of Philosophy as the editor of the handy and valuable edition of the Dictionary of Philosophy which in a short compass of 343 pages succeeds in giving the precise meaning of the important terms used in Philosophy. He is also the author of several authoritative works like, 'The Twentieth Century Philosophy,' 'The Spinoza Dictionary,' 'Treasury of Philosophy' and other works. The volume under review consists of readings in Epistemology and Logic by Philosophers like Plato and Duns Scotus, Royce and Russel, Schlick and Wittgenstein and others. The readings are arranged alphabetically according to the names of the authors and hence the volume starts with Peter Abailard and ends with Zabarella. One feels that this is an unfortunate arrangement for whatever one may say in its favour, it clearly does not give us a synthetic picture of the subject but on the contrary frightens us with the utterly diversified nature of the contents. Thus between Hume and Hegel we have a writer like Hispanus whose point of view has nothing to do with either. But for this characteristic defect, the extracts are well-chosen and the learned Editor has taken great pains to give us a representative collection of writings. Sixty-three writers of outstanding merit have been selected and their important contributions recorded. These enable us to understand the comprehensive nature and depth of the subject. The short biographical and bibliographic introduction at the beginning of each chapter is very useful and introduces the reader to other sources if he is interested in the writer. It is very gratifying that modern writers like Wittgenstein, Whitehead, Schlick, Russell, and Sartre find a place in the volume. The writings of Carroll, George Boole, Bernouilli and de Morgan give us a very good insight into probabilities and mathematical logic, subjects in Logic which are sadly neglected in the Indian universities. The book is encyclopaedic in character and is very well got up. It is a very good acquisition for a student of Philosophy.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI

CHANDOGYA UPANISHAD: SAMKHYA POINT OF VIEW: By Dr Anima Sen Gupta. Pub. Author, Patna University, Patna. P. 40. Price Rs. 3.00.

In this very welcome study the author has made a serious attempt to see how far the Upanishads can be interpreted from the Samkhyan standpoint. In an able introduction she points out how so many ideas of the Samkhya philosophy are found scattered in the various texts. But she is careful not to read her own thoughts in the ancient scriptures. She agrees that the duality of the Purusha and Prakriti — by whatever name it may be called—is throughout given a secondary place in the Upanishadic thought where the one pervading note is of the One Brahman. It is thereafter, after the self-bifurcation of the manifesting Brahman, that the process developed in the thought of the Samkhya can be traced in the cosmogonies of the various Upanishads.

Dr Anima Sen Gupta makes a detailed study of the sixth chapter of the Chhandogya dealing with Sad-Vidya, and points out how far the Samkhya ideas are embedded in the philosophy underlying the Vidya. She infers that at one time the Samkhya interpretation was as important as the Vedantic and gives sound reasons why she comes to that conclusion. We do hope the author will continue her study of other Upanishads with this approach and in the same methodical manner, thereby enriching our knowledge of the Upanishadic lore.

M. P. PANDIT

SRI LALITHA SAHASRANAMAM: By Dr Chaganti Suryanarayana Murthi. Pp. 166+30. Price Rs. 6. Ganesh & Co. Private Ltd., Madras-17.

This is a highly valuable treatise, which is bound to be of immense assistance to the votaries of Sri Lalitambika, whose thousand names occupy an honoured place in the repertoire of a Hindu devotee or Sadhaka. The author is absolutely correct in maintaining that every one of the names is a mantra by itself, besides being a descriptive attribute of the Goddess. The Sahasranama is replete with the terminology of Yoga Shastra, and a compendium of the entire religious lore and culture, even as the Bhagavad Gita is. As such, it carries with it an irresistible appeal to all the Sadhakas, be they Grihastas, Sannyasins or Bhaktas or Jnanins.

In his introduction, the author has justifiably correlated the experiences of Hindu religious mystics in the light of modern scientific discoveries and theories. He has traced the worship of Shakti down through the ages, and has with truth pointed out the role of Adi Sankara in obliterating many of the evils associated with Shakti worship, and in installing the Sattvic Sri Sarada in his monastic institutions. Thereby it has been shown that monism in Indian Philosophy could not be dissociated from the worship of the Divine Mother.

The Lalitha Sahasranama is itself a synthesis of the various paths for God realization. The great guru is the Goddess Herself. But the author does well to emphasise that Sri Lalitambika should be worshipped not for worldly ends alone but Moksha as well.

The Upanishads and other sacred books have been copiously drawn on for the annotation of the thousand names.

S. RAJAGOPALAN

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: By Avasthi and Maheshwari. Pub. Lakshmi Narain Agarwal, Agra. Pp. 568. Price Rs. 15.

The book is primarily intended as a text book for students of Public Administration. The book is divided into seven parts dealing with the basic concepts of Public Administration like the organisational set up, management, Personnel and Financial Administration and Administrative Improvement. The reader is acquainted with the latest developments in Public Administration in India like the O. & M. and the S.R.U. set-ups. While the book is written with special reference to Indian conditions, parallel trends in other countries like U.S.A., U.K. and other Commonwealth countries have also been cited. Numerous references in this book to standard works indicating the sources will doubtless interest the serious student to dive deep into the subject.

This book will be of interest not only to the students but to the administrators and the general public as well; especially the chapters dealing with Personnel Administration and Administrative Improvement. The efficiency of any department depends not only on the worker but on proper supervision, real and effective, which requires "intelligence, quickness of grasp, keenness of observation and insight into human nature and its perversities and above all patience and sympathy and imagination."

It has been rightly pointed out that the work is a human being and that in order to create t maximum urge in the worker to give his b the employer has to recognize that human eff requires motivation and that incentives a awards go a long way in this direction rath than deterrent punishment.

The book is characterized throughout by obje tivity and fairness. Even the much malign 'bureaucracy' turns out to be not so detestab after all and has something to contribute to t administrative efficiency. It is like fire—a go servant but a bad master. The reluctance of c administrators to profit by the latest improv ments in administrative methods has also co in for just criticism. "Certain departme would sooner sanction half a dozen peons a messengers than sanction a telephone."

The only defect detracting from the value the book is the numerous printing mistakes whi we hope, will be rectified in subsequent editio

Moderately priced, the book should be w received and should prove a welcome additi to any library.

V. VEERARAGHAVA

THE CHIEF CURRENTS OF CONTEMPORA PHILOSOPHY: By Dhirendra Mo Dutta. Pub. The University of Calcu Price Rs. 12. Pages 589.

Historically, like other branches of knowled the development of thought or philosophy a needs some close study and appraisal from t to time. It is a fact that with our changing l its social-pattern, its culture and values, modes and methods of human reflections, a change their course. These manifest changes the problems of life and its different approac to the concept of Truth, Good and Beauty, generally reflected in such a study of conte porary philosophy. Therefore a study of c temporary philosophy includes not only hist but a comparative analysis and evaluation of nature of growth in different thought proces

'The Chief Currents of Contemporary Ph sophy' shows the trend of modern philoso both in the East and in the West, including In of course. As the major portion of the book devoted to European thought, it comprehe almost all the major philosophical developme —from Neo-Hegelianism to even the latest gro in Existentialism and Logical Positivism. A as it has happened in other fields of human st and action, contemporary philosophical mo ments are also getting more life-centered, p tical-biased, experiential and pragmatic against the old traditions of metaphysics epistemology. The predominant role of idealistic thought is being challenged at every step and attempts are also being made simultaneously to corroborate as far as possible, Truths of philosophical judgments with the important discoveries of science and technology. One immediate result of this is that philosophy has lost much of its distinct terminology which had its peculiar grandeur and clarity.

This condensed process of thought, as it may be called, is out to fight all that is 'Absolute', 'Universal', and 'Transcendental' or 'Abstract' in philosophy; and it is very earnest to seek an integration (however it is), of all that is thinking, feeling, willing and doing also, on equal terms of value and priority.

Further it is a happy sign that there is a growing tendency in contemporary philosophical movements to study and acknowledge the role of different practical and religious movements, such as the Zen, Sri Ramakrishna Vedanta, Sri Aurobindo and Gandhi movements. This is surely a departure from the past orthodox academic attitude, which always shunned the practical side of philosophy and life that were connected with religion and sadhana. Naturally if philosophy is to vindicate the efficacy of thought in human affairs and help mankind not only in their day to day life but in their higher life, it must give a due place for religion in the bosom of philosophy itself.

But the real controversy then starts between such varied growth of contemporary philosophy and fundamentals of religion which claim eternity. For example, the philosophical Truth in India, with all its completeness and maturity, is so connected with her immortal religious heritage that its contribution to the modern philosophical development is apparently far less encouraging. Quite likely therefore, this aspect of vitality rather the eternal principles of Indian philosophy, which is so emphatic on practice and life, is misapprehended as its conservativism and time-worn character. But in spite of this one cannot overlook the growing movements of Vedanta and its practical tendency to fit itself with modern life. The contemporary growth of philosophy in India surely marks some interesting and learned attempts to re-examine the permanent sanctity of her philosophical conclusions in the light of current world thought.

Dr Dutta, a learned teacher of philosophy of many years standing, could alone tackle so justifiably, in his lucid and simple manner, such a wide range of philosophical subjects in a single comprehensive book like this. Not only the prepared mind of a student of philosophy, but even a general reader can approach this kind of exposition and gain a natural interest in current thoughts all over the world. This second edition of the book is expected to be well received.

Br. Sudhangsu

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

At New Delhi

On Thursday, the 17th January, 1963 Swami Vivekananda's Birth Centenary was observed at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, with Usha Kirtan, Mangalaratrik, Vedic-chanting, Puja and Hawana, Prasad distribution etc. On the same day, at 4 p.m. a Public Meeting was held at Ramlila Grounds, New Delhi, (report of which appeared in the February issue of *Vedanta Kesari*).

Recitation competitions in Sanskrit, Hindi, English, Bengali, Punjabi and Tamil for school students and speech competitions in English and Hindi for both school and college students were held from the 1st February to the 10th February, 1963. 3224 candidates participated.

An exhibition containing different poses of Swamiji's photos along with printed extracts of Swamiji's utterances corresponding to the different poses was arranged.

On Sunday the 3rd February, 1963 a public meeting was held at the Ramakrishna Mission premises and was presided over by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime Minister of India. Swami Swahananda, Swami Bhaktananda, Prof. M. M. Begg, Principal, Delhi College and Sardar Bahadur Karnail Singh, the former Chairman of the Railway Board, addressed the largely attended gathering.

Shri Nehru delivering his presidential address asked the people to follow the teachings of Swami Vivekananda who taught mankind to shed fear and said that the task of wiping out fear and weakness from within our lives is much greater than the Chinese aggression from outside. Swami

Vivekananda fought relentlessly against the internal debilities in the various spheres of national life. Sri Nehru went on to say that if he were to name a single individual as an ideal for children and young men he would name Swami Vivekananda, who although died before he was forty left a deep impression on the sands of time. 'This spoke for the intensity with which he lived. Swamiji had a unique personality and eminently integrated the past heritage with modern life. He gave a new orientation to old ideals'.

On Sunday the 10th February, 1963 a Students' Public Meeting was held under the presidentship of Professor Humayun Kabir, Union Minister for Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs. Prof. Kabir congratulated all the students who took part in the competitions and gave away the prizes to 468 successful competitors.

IN AMERICA

Vedanta Society of St. Louis

On Thursday, January 17, a special worship with prayers, meditation, and the chanting of Sanskrit hymns was conducted in the shrine of the Vedanta Society during the morning hours. A number of devotees attended the function conducted by Swami Satprakashananda.

On Sunday, January 20, a public meeting was held in the chapel of the Society at 10-30 a.m. with the following program:

(1) Prayer and preliminary remarks. (2) Chanting of Sanskrit hymn to Swami Vivekananda. (3) Presentation of the message of the President of the Ramakrishna Order, Belur Math, India. (4) An address on 'Swami Vivekananda, the Man of the Hour' by Swami Satprakashananda. (5) Devotional songs. (6) Reading of Swami Vivekananda's poem, 'The Song of the Sannyasin'. (7) Instrumental music.

Distribution of the booklet, 'The Universal Message of Swami Vivekananda,' was also one of the items of the celebrations. As a part of the centenary celebrations the center presented 185 copies of the book 'Swami Vivekananda: The Yogas and other Works' (value 10 dollars) to various Universities, Colleges, Schools etc.

Arrangements are being made for holding Centenary meetings in Kansas City, Mo., Edinburg, Texas, and Albion, Nebraska, by the local Vedanta Students who are members of the Vedanta Society of St. Louis.

Concluding meeting of the celebration on Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary will be in January, 1964, the main features of which will be—Sanskrit Chant, speeches on Swamiji, devotional songs, *presentation of the prize for th best essay on Swami Vivekananda*, instrument music, etc.

At Seattle, Washington

On January 17th Swami Vivekananda's bir centenary was observed at the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center, Seattle, Washington b worship in the shrine. On the next day Swa Vividishananda conducted a devotional servic to which all the members and friends of th Center were invited. The service consisted prayers, music, and a talk on the life and teach ings of Swamiji, and ended with the showin of some slides and the serving of refreshment

On January 20th, at the regular Sunday se vice which is open to the public, Swami Viv dishananda spoke about Swamiji in a sermo entitled 'The Religion of Inner Strength, Peac and Knowledge.' In it he brought out the prin ciples of spiritual life which are embodied an illustrated in the life and teachings of Swa Vivekananda.

The Center has also plans for more elabora observances later in the year. Enlarging and re modelling the Centre's chapel, a rededication se vice, celebration in the autumn and organizati of a public symposium on some topic related t Swamiji's mission, in which Rabbis and ministe of various Christian denominations will be invite to participate, are some of the items of t celebrations.

A number of copies of the standard books Vedanta, including the Life and Works of Swam will be collected and donated to the Seattle Pu lic Library also as a part of the celebration.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MYLAPORE, MADRAS-4.

Sri Ramanavami

Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras observed th Ramanavami on 2nd April 1963 with the singin of 'Ramanam' after the usual evening Arati i the shrine.

There was a public celebration on 7th Apr 1963 when Sri K. Panchapakesa Iyer, M.A retired professor of Annamalai University spo for more than an hour on the 'Life and Teac ings of Sri Rama', in English. The speaker his fluency of language and thought, interspers freely with Sanskrit quotations from the Valmi Ramayana kept the audience intently listeni to him till the end of his discourse.

.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
Swami Vivekananda

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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PAÑCADAŚĪ

प्रत्यक् तत्त्व विवेक

Discussion on the Indwelling Truth

तथा स्वप्नेऽत्र वेद्यं तु न स्थिरं जागरे स्थिरम् ।
तद्भेदोऽतस्तयोः संविदेकरूपा न भिद्यते ॥ ४ ॥

(*yatha* as in the waking state), *tatha* similarly, *swapné* in the dream state, (*asti* is). *Atra* in this state (dream), *vedyam* knowable (object of knowledge), *na* not, *sthiram* constant, *jagaré* in the waking state, *tu* but, *sthiram* unfluctuating, *athaḥ* therefore, *tat* the, *bhedaḥ* difference. *tayoḥ* In these two (states of waking and dream), *samvidékarūpā* consciousness being of one form, *na* does not, *bhidyaté* differ.

As in the waking state so too it is in the dream state. In this state of dream the knowable object is inconstant whereas in the waking state it is unfluctuating; this is the difference between the two. In these two states, however, the consciousness being of one and the same form does not differ.

After explaining in the previous verse the experiences in the waking state, such as the diversity in the outer world and unity in the consciousness, the author goes on to show that similar is the situation in the dream also.

As there is diversity in the things cognized, like this is a cow and this is an elephant, but oneness in the consciousness (knowledge) *in the waking state, so too it is* in the dream state * A doubt may arise here: If the experiences in both the waking and dream states, are identical then how can one distinguish between the two? The author explains that there is a difference *between these two states*: that in the dream state the objects perceived are very *inconstant* i.e., they disappear as soon as the person who dreams wakes up; *but* they are *unfluctuating in the waking state*, i.e., they can be perceived at a later date also. Due to this slight difference in experience, *however*, there is no variance in *consciousness*, it being of *one form*, of one nature in both the states.

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* Dream state is described as the cessation of working or withdrawal of the sense-organs, (from their objects) in sleep and functioning only of the mind, called also as *antahkarana*, according to the impressions received by it in the waking state.

SELF-EFFORT AND SELF-SURRENDER

Self-effort and self-surrender, are two meaningful words which are often loosely employed ; and are more often than not mistaken as contradictory to one another. Self-effort is usually associated and aligned with the follower of the path of jñāna and self-surrender with that of the follower of bhakti. Under such circumstances it will look paradoxical to say that both these attitudes can, nay should be found in a spiritual aspirant. To say that one supplements the other, one completes the other, or one is the corollary of the other will appear as absurd. But many things that look incongruous at first sight, on a superficial valuation or a cursory examination reveal quite contrary natures on more sustained and penetrating investigation. It is so in the physical world as well as in the metaphysical.

It is necessary for us here to know how this popular error, that these two attitudes of self-effort and self-surrender are for two distinctive types of aspirants, crept into the human mind. On first examination there seem to be sufficient grounds for this view. We all know that the path of jñāna yoga is a severe one. The aspirant has to begin with the negation of the phenomena. He has to fight every moment with his mind and restrain it from identifying or associating itself not only with possessions and relations but with his body, mind and ego too. This is a tremendous task. Herculean efforts are needed to counteract the propensities that the mind has gathered for ages. And as Swami Vivekananda puts it, 'It is swimming against the current,' the hardest job. Sri Krishna too concurs on this point when he says, 'The difficulties encountered by those who are attached to the path of the Unmanifest are greater.'[1] Mark the word *greater* here. It is only a relative term, a comparison with the other path, that of bhakti. Due to the enormous effort that was required to be employed in order to follow this pa self-effort naturally came to mean the path jñāna. Thus far none will contradict this co tention. In the path of devotion, on the oth hand, the devotee is required to surrend everything, his body, mind and soul to Go Consequently the laity took it as the path self-surrender. Neither can it be said that is a misnomer if the two attitudes are n considered exclusive. All the miscomprehe sion starts when each is precluded and seg gated from the other.

We shall now consider, the how and w of the above statement. We have seen th the path of knowledge requires inordin efforts and it appears that there is no gh of a chance for surrender there. But let examine the implications of these efforts. follower of jñāna denies that he is the bo or mind. That is his discipline. What th does he postulate? What does he consid himself to be? He says he is the Self, t Atman, which is of the nature of eter purity, knowledge and freedom. But there a thing called ego which stands as a barr from an aspirant's realizing this nature. Thou one may have overcome the idea for the ti being that he is the body he usually identif himself with this ego, the lower self. But t ego is not the real Self. This ego is to merged in the Higher Self, the True Self, t Cosmic consciousness ; in other words the se effort which the aspirant was considering his should enable him to surrender his sm self to the universal Self, Brahman, then alo will his efforts have a meaning. Then alo he would have gained his end. If howev he denies outwardly his body but holds on his ego, the ego may swallow him up, bi him to the world as do the body and mi in the case of the ordinary man. Let us more explicit : The proper and true kno ledge is 'Atman is not the doer ; not t enjoyer, not touched by whatever happens the body.' Now as long as any idea of do or enjoying remains in the aspirant, he cannot be called a follower of the complete and true *jñāna mārga*. When nothing is his how can the efforts alone be his? If he is not the body how can the efforts of the body be his? If he is not the mind, how can the efforts of the mind be his? But this does not mean that he should give up efforts but should give up the idea that he is the doer. When it comes to this we pause to ask: What then does it amount to if not surrender, surrender to the True Self, the Universal Self? We have thus seen that actually self-effort and self-surrender go together in the case of the path of jñāna.

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[1] क्लेशोऽधिकतरस्तेषामव्यक्तासक्तचेतसाम् ।

—*Bhagavad Gita,* 12. 5.

The other path which we take as that of self-surrender requires perhaps a little less of effort but as much of perseverance and tenacity as the first. But, because the efforts are a little less it cannot be taken to mean that there is no place for self-effort at all. It will be puerile to understand it this way. Even in the physical world, we observe, every living being struggling and making effort for its very life, for its very preservation; and wherever efforts in this direction dwindled in that proportion these beings disappeared from the face of the earth. There is a saying in Sanskrit which impresses this idea vividly: 'Beasts of prey do not enter the mouth of a sleeping lion,'[2] that is to say that even the lion which is considered as the king among the beasts has also to prowl and hunt if it has to live. Without effort nothing can live. We shall cite another saying in Sanskrit which brings out this meaning: 'To a person who is lion-like in self-exertion, Lakshmi, the Goddess of Wealth reaches. But idlers allude to it as "destiny, surely destiny". Denying destiny do manly endeavour, and if you fail then where is blame for you?'[3] One should apply this advice in spiritual life too. People there may be who think that self-effort on the mundane plane is not only good but incumbent but in the psychological plane self-surrender is the best. It is as good as saying, 'I shall enjoy life and God will look after my soul, if there is one.' This is the hedonist's view and not self-surrender. This is the greatest pitfall, nay this view is the graveyard of spirituality. It is hypocrisy or at the most deceiving oneself. This way none was saved. It does not settle the issue of life, nor of death. It is neither here nor there.

There is a beautiful parable of Sri Ramakrishna which brings out this kind of hypocrisy in its true colours: 'A Brahmana, succeeded in rearing up a beautiful garden with much effort and great pains. One day a cow entered the garden and began to graze and destroy the plants. The Brahmana was infuriated. He so violently assaulted the cow that it died. He was seized with fear. He thought, "Alas, I, a Brahmana, have killed a cow—which is the greatest of sins." The Brahmana had read a little of the Vedas and remembered that human sense organs derive their power of functioning from the gods and as Indra was the presiding deity of the hand he pacified himself by thinking: "It is Indra who has moved my hand and killed the cow."

'Now the sin due to the killing of the cow came to enter the body of the Brahmana. He said, "Go away, you have no place here; Indra has killed her, go to him." So the sin went to seize Indra. Indra said to the sin, "Wait a little please, let me go, speak a word or two with the Brahmana and come back. Seize me then if you like." Saying so, Indra assumed a human form, entered into the Brahmana's garden and saw him standing close by looking after the plants and trees. Indra began to praise the beauty of the garden in the Brahmana's hearing: 'Oh, what a beautiful garden it is! With what good taste have the plants and trees been planted, each in its proper place." He approached the Brahmana and said, "Sir, can you tell me whose garden it is? It is so beautiful." On hearing the praise of the garden, the Brahmana was besides himself with joy and said, "Sir, this is my garden; it is I who have planted all these. Come let me show you round." While he was thus taking Indra round and praising himself all the time, he came inadvertantly to the place where the dead cow was lying. Startled, as it were, Indra asked, "Whew! Who has killed the cow here?" The Brahmana, who was all the while taking the credit of planting the garden, was at a loss what to say and remained utterly silent. Indra then assumed his own form and said, "Ah! you hypocrite, you have done whatever is good in the garden and it is the killing of the cow alone that devolves on me. Isn't it? Here is your sin of cow-killing. Take it." Saying so, Indra disappeared and the sin came and took possession of the Brahmana's body.' Such is the surrender that some practise. It is therefore better that as long as one tends the body, one attends to the soul also and that more solicitously than one does the body.

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[2] न हि सुप्तस्य सिंहस्य प्रविश्यन्ति मुखे मृगाः ।

[3] उद्योगिनं पुरुषसिंहमुपैति लक्ष्मी-
दैवं हि दैवमिति कापुरुषा वदन्ति ।
दैवं निहत्य कुरु पौरुषमात्मशक्त्या
यत्ने कृते यदि न सिध्यति कोऽत्र दोषः ॥

Again surrender is not running away from duty. Sri Krishna in the Gita chastises Arjuna for posing as a wise man and trying to escape from his duty to fight the battle. He enumerates several reasons why Arjuna should fight. First of all he says: 'You talk like a wise man but grieve over those who should not be grieved. For, a wise person grieves not for the dead nor the living.'[4] Secondly, 'For a Kshatriya there is no greater good fortune than fight a righteous battle.'[5] Even while one worked one should remember God, for having continuously and constantly kept Him in one's mind, the thought of Him will persist even at the last moments of one's life, which will enable one to reach God. This is the reason why Sri Krishna exhorts Arjuna, 'Remember Me and fight.'[6] Lastly he says, 'Even the maintenance of your body w become difficult if you become inactive. Doing duty has its own merit. Swami Vive nanda says: 'You should culitvate a no nature by doing your duty. By doing our du we get rid of the idea of duty; and then a then only we feel everything as done by Go We are but machines in His hand. This bod is opaque, God is the lamp. Whatever i going out of the body is God's. You don't fe it. You feel "I". This is delusion. You mu learn calm submission to the will of Go Duty is the best school for it. This duty i morality. Drill yourself to be thoroughly su missive.'

What then is the real meaning of self-su render? Who can really surrender? The are the burning questions one should se answers for, before talking of surrender. S to a devotee means the *jīva* who resides in t body. There is the Lord, Īśwara who presid over all the *jīvas*. The surrender of this jīv i.e. body, mind and soul, to Īśwara is re self-surrender. It is the calm submission t the will of God, without fretting or fumin It is the implicit belief in the goodness of G and one's capacity to view everything t happens to oneself, whether good or evil, as blessing from God. Once a great sai Pavahari Baba, was bitten by a snake. T saint fell unconscious. After he revived a regained his consciousness some one ask him how it was that he who did no harm any creature was bitten. His reply was: ' was a messenger from the beloved, the Lor That is how a devotee views even a cat trophe. There is no room for egoism in sel surrender; one has nothing to call one's ow having submitted everything to the Lord.

Sri Ramakrishna gives the analogy of kitten, depending on its mother, to illustr self-surrender. The mother cat carries t kitten in its mouth, securely holding it, a sometimes puts it on the master's bed, som times on the roof behind a pile of wood. B whatever it does, it does for the good of the kitten. That type of dependence is complete surrender, complete reliance, on God. The aspirant yearns for God and God alone. He does not want anything but God. He does not calculate how much material gain he can reap by his surrender. There is no trading in his surrender. Our Epics like the *Mahabharata* are replete with stories which delineate such self-surrender. Prahlada and Ambarisha are some of the shining examples they have held before us.

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[4] अशोच्यानन्वशोचस्त्वं प्रज्ञावादांश्च भाषसे ।
गतासूनगतसूंश्च नानुशोचन्ति पण्डिताः ॥
—*Bhagavad Gita*, 2. 11.

[5] धर्म्याद्धि युद्धाच्छ्रेयोऽन्यत्क्षत्रियस्य न विद्यते ।
—*Ibid.*, 2. 31.

[6] मामनुस्मर युद्धय च ।—*Ibid.*, 8. 7.

[7] शरीरयात्रापि च ते न प्रसिध्येदकर्मणः ॥
—*Ibid.*, 3.

In recent times Sri Durga Charan Nag and Girish Chandra Ghosh, the two householder disciples of Sri Ramakrishna stand out, prominently as illustrations of this attitude of surrender. Nag Mahashaya was superb. There was no peer to him in humility, and his love of God was unique. But the miracle of the Master was Girish Chandra Ghosh. Girish at the time he met Sri Ramakrishna was leading the life of a Bohemian. But by his simple and unbounded faith and absolute surrender he was turned from a sinner into a Saint. How was this alchemy performed? When after meeting Sri Ramakrishna Girish evinced interest in spiritual life and asked the Master how he should conduct thenceforward, Sri Ramakrishna, a teacher *par excellence* as he was, far from making any violent attempt at reform asked him to live as he was living but take the Lord's name morning and evening. But even this simple discipline Girish could not promise to carry out. Sri Ramakrishna then asked him to take the name of the Lord at least while taking his food. This too Girish could not bring himself to assure because he did not himself know in what state he would be at that time. At last the Master asked Girish to give him the 'power of attorney' and said he would do whatever was necessary for his salvation. Girish jumped at the suggestion and gladly accepted it, thinking that he wouldn't have to do anything. But one day when he was talking in the presence of the Master he said 'I would do it'. The Master immediately corrected him. He said 'How can you say that? Have you not surrendered yourself to the Lord? Then say that if the Lord wills I shall do it.' From that day onwards Girish had to remember Sri Ramakrishna before he could do anything or say anything. Girish later on said 'How could I know that giving the "power of attorney" was such a difficult task? Much remains to be understood even now. I find that at some time there is an end to the spiritual practices like japa, austerities and devotional exercises but there is no end to the work of a person who has given the "power of attorney"; for, he has to watch his every step and every breath to know whether he does so depending on Him and His power or on this wicked "I".' So difficult is absolute self-surrender.

Swami Vivekananda remarks, 'If every body can truly live always in this mood, then he is a free Soul. But what really happens is that for the 'good' I have the credit, but for the 'bad' Thou, God, are responsible. Without the attainment of the fullness of Knowledge or Divine Love, such a state of absolute reliance on the Lord does not come.' It is therefore, better to be realistic, measure our shortcomings and exert truthfully and perseveringly to eliminate them; better to be honest than to be simulating reliance on God. Sri Krishna, though in a slightly different context, points out: 'He only has no work whose enjoyment is in the Atman alone whose satisfaction is in the Atman, whose bliss is in the Atman alone.'[8] Only such a person soaked in the thought of God, permeated through and through by His presence, 'who sees God inside and outside need not do any tapas.'[9] Until one attains that stage one should earnestly endeavour, has to put in all efforts.

It is obvious from the above that absolute self-surrender is possible for the highest type of devotee, of which there are very few at any one time. We have to know then as to what is the path for the generality of aspirants. Sri Krishna in the chapter on bhakti yoga in the Gita gives a list of paths one could follow according to one's capacity. He asks Arjuna, 'Fix your mind on Me, rest your intellect in Me, when you will, without doubt, be able to live in Me. If however, you find it difficult try the Yoga of practice; if that is impossible, work for Me. Even by doing work for Me you will attain the goal. If you are unable to do that also, taking refuge in Me and being self-controlled, renounce the fruits of all actions.'[10] It is necessary to awaken love of God within our hearts by any one or all of these methods. And once divine love dawns there is no danger for the aspirant. Till then it is a hard uphill task and we have to face it. There is no easy way in religion. It is idle fancy to imagine that God's mercy will suddenly descend upon us. If it comes, well and good, but let us purify ourselves to receive it, and do our part of the work. We are well aware of the saying 'God helps those who help themselves,' and we do remember it in our earthly pursuits. Let us apply it in our spiritual pursuit as well. There should be no stint or hesitation on our part to exert, at the same time there should be no eagerness for result. For, God, the all-merciful Lord, under Whom we seek shelter is the Dispenser of all fruits. He will do what is good for us, and when we love God, exertion will not be exertion, it won't be tiresome. If we do all work as a dedication to God, there would be j in it.

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[8] यस्त्वात्मरतिरेव स्यादात्मतृप्तश्च मानवः ।
आत्मन्येव च संतुष्टस्तस्य कार्यं न विद्यते ॥
—*Ibid.*, 3. 17.

[9] अन्तर्बहिर्यदि हरिस्तपसा ततः किम् ।

Lastly we come to the question, what ex tion or effort is a devotee required to put i The *Bhagavata*, the bhakti sutras and sai have dealt with this subject at great leng and may be separately discussed. Yet it w not be out of place, if we mention here o significant verse of the poet-saint, Kulaśekha Ālwar, which exquisitely portrays how eve limb of our body can be utilized for, a every function of the body be sublimated t worship and adoration of the Lord. Thou much of the charm and beauty of the ver will be lost in translation we give it for t sake of those who cannot follow Sanskr Addressing the different limbs the saint say 'Sing, O tongue Keshava's glory; think O mi of Muraripu; O hands worship Śrīdhara; he O ears the stories of Achyuta; O you eyes s Krishna; bend your steps O feet towar Hari's abode; smell, O nose the tulasi-l offered at the feet of Mukunda; bow down head to Adhokshaja.'[11] Every name of t Lord used here is pregnant with meani thinking about which man becomes imbu with devotion. Hence, resting our will in t Lord and remembering Him always we sho do *sādhana*.

Love is the easiest and smoothest way towards the self-surrender or subjection of the will.

* * * *

We are so lazy, we do not want to do anything for ourselves. We want a personal God, a saviour or a prophet to do everything for us. If everything is done for a man by another, he will lose the use of his own limbs. Anything we do ourselves, that is the only thing we do. Anything that is done for us by another never can be ours.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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[10] *Bhagavad Gita*, 12. 8-11.

[11] जिह्वे कीर्तय केशवं मुररिपुं चेतो भज श्रीधरं
पाणिद्वन्द्व समर्चयाच्युतकथाः श्रोत्रद्वय त्वं शृणु
कृष्णं लोकय लोचनद्वय हरेर्गच्छाङ्घ्रियुग्मालयं
जिघ्र घ्राण मुकुन्दपादतुलसीं मूर्धन् नमाधोक्षजम
—*Mukundamala*.

PRASTHANA TRAYA AND ITS BACKGROUND

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

Let us now turn to the extent and content of the Veda. The following anecdote is found in the *Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa* of the Yajur Veda. 'The sage Bharadwāja lived the life of a celibate student (brahmachāri) for three consecutive births. He had devoted three entire lives for the study of the Vedas. Towards the close of the third birth, he became decrepit and senile and was lying powerless to move. Indra approached him and entered into a conversation with him. "Well, Bharadwāja, if I grant you birth again a fourth time, what would you do with that life?" Bharadwāja replied: "Certainly, I shall spend the entire span of that life, too, living as a Brahmachāri studying the Vedas." Indra then pointed out to him three huge mountain-like heaps of which Bharadwāja had not known before. Then taking one handful from each, he said that each particle of it is a Veda and that what Bharadwāja had learnt in three lives is only a handful of the whole heap. He (Indra) said *anantā vai vedāḥ*, "the Vedas are limitless or endless. I shall now teach you *Sāvitra Vidyā* which will take you to the highest goal."'

This anecdote makes it clear that the Vedas themselves considered their extent to be limitless. In the purāṇas we get a description of the various *śākhās* of each Veda, the groups of people who studied it, and other details. There is again another story alluded to by Sri Vidyāraṇya in the *Jivanmukti Viveka*. A sage by name Durvāsas came with a cart-load of Śāstra Books to pay his respects to the God Mahādeva. In the learned assembly of the God the sage Nārada poked a joke at him by comparing him to the ass carrying a load on its back. At this, Durvāsas was fired with so much anger that he threw away all his books in the salt ocean. God Mahādeva then initiated him into Ātma Vidyā. From these two stories whose motives are clear, we can easily understand that the purport of all knowledge is realization of God. From the story of Bharadwāja we can also learn that the Vedic sages had a very broad conception about the Vedas. The Vedas are infinite because the needs, tastes, temperament and abilities of mankind for whom they are meant are so infinite and diverse. Though Ātma Jñāna or knowledge of God is their final purport, the candidates for that being extremely rare, a very large fraction of the Vedas are meant for lesser aspirants who require constant aid of the Veda for preventing relapse into irreligion.

Though it has been said that the Vedas are infinite, the books representing that literature now available do not exceed a few thousands of printed pages. They are traditionally classified as Rig Veda, Yajur Veda, Sāma Veda and Atharva Veda. Each of these Vedas has internal divisions generally known as Mantra and Brāhmaṇa. The collection of Mantras is called Samhitā. '*mantra brāhmaṇayoḥ veda nāmadheyam*'. That portion of the Vedas which is not mantras is called Brāhmaṇa and that portion of the Vedas which is not Brāhmaṇa is called Mantra. This is the ancient definition of Mantra and Brāhmaṇa. The Mantra part of the Vedas now available in authoritative printed editions are 1. Rig Veda Samhitā, 2. Sāma Veda Mantra Samhitā (also called Kapishṭhala Samhitā), 3. Saunaka Samhitā, 4. Pippalāda Samhitā (both forming two śākhās of the Atharva Veda). There are four samhitas of the Yajur Veda known as Taittiriya Samhitā also called Krishna Yajur Veda, Kaṭhaka Samhitā, Maitrāyaṇi Samhitā, and Vājasaneyi Samhitā which is also called Śukla Yajurveda.

The following ten Brāhmaṇas are printed in Banaras, Calcutta, Germany and other places. (1) Aitareya, (2) Samkhyāyana, (3) Tandya, (4) Jaiminiya, (5) Taittiriya, (6) Kaṭha, (7) Śatapatha, (8) Shadvimśa, (9) Sāmavidhāna, (10) Gopatha. We have besides these three āraṇyakas : *Aitareyāraṇyaka*, *Śānkhyāyanāraṇyaka* and *Taittiriyāraṇyaka;* the first two belonging to the Rig Veda and the third to the Yajur Veda. The third important class in the division made above is called Upaniṣad. About 230 Upaniṣads are now available in print of which the following are most important in so far as sentences from them are made the subject of discussion in the Brahmasutras, or completely commented upon by Śankarāchārya and others, or quoted in their Bhāshyas as authority. 1. *Aitareya,* 2. *Kaushītaki,* 3. *Taittirīya,* 4. *Chāndogya,* 5. *Bṛhadāraṇyaka,* 6. *Īśāvāsya,* 7. *Talavakāra Brāhmaṇa,* 8. *Kāṭhaka,* 9. *Muṇḍaka,* 10. *Praśna,* 11. *Māṇḍūkya,* 12. *Śivasankalpa,* 13. *Swetāśwatara,* 14. *Mahānārāyaṇa,* 15. *Jābāla,* 16. *Maitrāyaṇī,* 17. *Kaivalya,* 18. *Atharvaśiras,* 19. *Atharvaśikha.* The rest of the Upaniṣads are supposed to be of much later origin though they also contain many illuminating ideas about Vedanta, Yoga, Sannyāsa and worship of God as Śiva, Viṣṇu, Śakti or other deities. The above is a description of the Vedas enumerating the names of works which are now available, and passages from which are always referred to as Śruti or Śabda Pramāṇa.

We now come to the description of the same body of literature considering the form of their content. First we have to understand the three terms Rik, Yajus and Sāma. The word Rik means a verse of praise. Riks are metrical units of specified length. *pādenaca arthenaca upetāḥ vṛttabaddhāḥ ṛcaḥ.* The Rig Veda Samhitā is so called because it is a collection of hymns or Riks or laudatory verses. In a Vedic sacrifice these Rik verses are recited by one of the officiating priests called *hotā* or *hotṛ.* Any verse in the Rig Veda Samhita is called an *Rik.* A group of three such verses is called *tricah* and a group of ten may be called *daśarca.*

Any Rik of the Rig Veda or a verse similar to an Rik of the Rig Veda found in any ot Veda, Brāhmaṇa, Āraṇyaka or Upanis either quoted from the Rig Veda or belong to the place where it is found is also cal an *Rik.* Riks are also called Mantras. T term Mantra means a verse, formula or sentence used for the purpose of mental verbal repetition and which is believed protect the person who repeats it. *mana trāyate iti mantrāḥ* or *mananasya sādhan mantraḥ.*

Yajus means a prose formula repeated the Adhwaryu in the Vedic Yajña. The f lowing is the definition : वृत्तगीति विवर्जितं प्रश्लिष्ठ पठिताः यजुषः । The Ya Veda Samhita is a collection of Yajus or pr passages used by the Adhwaryu. They a called Yajur Mantra, just as the verses the Rig Veda are called Rik Mantra. Thou the whole of Yajur Veda Samhita is cal Yajus, interspersed among them are fou several Rik verses quoted from the Rig Ve Samhita, sometimes with slight variations ; a some Rik mantras original to Yajur Ve Samhita itself.

The word *Sāma* means a melody. Th are defined thus : *gītirvā sāmāni.* The Sām are songs sung by the *udgātṛ* priest in t Yajñā. A collection of the verses sung called Sāma Veda. The verses of the Sā Veda are for the most part the same as t ninth book of the Rig Veda with a very additions original to the former. And so Veda is called the *yoni* or place of origin Sāma Veda.

The Atharva Veda Samhita is more orig in many respects. Like the Rig Veda, t Atharva Veda also is composed in the form verses or *Riks* for the most part. But it co tains only much lesser number of verses t may be traced to either the Rig Veda or Yajur Veda. And most of those verses fou here in common with the other Vedas borrowed with modifications. Coming to Brāhmaṇas we notice that they are compo somewhat similar to the Yajur Veda Samh That is to say, in general, they are comp tions in prose interlarded with verses ei original to them or borrowed from the other Samhitas. Though the prose passages are somewhat similar to the prose formulas of the Yajur Veda Samhita, the sentences of the Brāhmaṇas are not called Yajus unless any particular passage be a quotation from the Yajur Veda Samhita. So also the verses found in the Brāhmaṇa unless they are introduced as an *Rik* are not called *Riks* or sometimes may be called as *gāthā*. The Āraṇyakas also are exactly like the Brāhmaṇas in their composition. The difference is only in the subject matter. We get here also prose and verse mixed and sometimes *Riks* quoted from the Samhitas.

When we come to the Upaniṣads they are not all of the same uniform nature. The *Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad* is exactly the fortieth chapter of the Śukla Yajur Veda Samhita. So it is called the Samhita Upaniṣad. It is literally Vedanta because it is found as the last chapter of the Śukla Yajur Veda Samhita and it is all in the form of verses. The *Kenopaniṣad* contains two parts, the first part of which is in the form of verses which is not found elsewhere and the second part is a narration in prose. As we have said, the whole of it forms part of a Brāhmaṇa (*Talavakāra*). The whole of the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* is in the form of verses and though it is referred to as Śruti, it is not called *Rik* but is honoured as mantra. *Praśnopaniṣad* is in prose; but there are some verses found also in the Atharva Veda Samhita. The *Muṇḍakopaniṣad* also is in verse like the *Kaṭha*. *Māṇḍūkya* is a very short prose piece. *Taittiriya Upaniṣad* is only part of the *Taittiriya Āraṇyaka*; so also the *Aitareya Upaniṣad* forms some sections of the *Aitareya Āraṇyaka*. The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* again forms the closing part of the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* is an independent work which is considered also as a Brāhmaṇa of the Sāmaveda. The *Śwetāśwatara Upaniṣad* is in verse and *Kaushītaki* and *Maitrāyaṇi* are in prose and the remaining Upaniṣads are either in prose or verse or a mixture of both.

The above is a description of the available Vedic literature from the view point of their internal divisions, style of composition and sequence. Now we shall see the subject matter or the thought content of this lore.

The Rig Veda Samhita contains a little over 1,000 sūktas (hymns) in about 17,000 verses. These hymns as we have seen fall under 10 books or Maṇḍalas of varying length. Of these, the 2nd to 8th Maṇḍalas contain *sūktas* of which the Rishis belong to the same family. The 1st and the 10th Maṇḍala contain the largest number of *sūktas* and their Rishis are many and varied. One *sūkta* may contain a number of Riks, the shortest three and the largest 47. One and the same *sūkta* may be the composition of one Rishi or of more than one. The whole *sūkta* may be sung in praise of one deity or more. One *sūkta* may be all in one metre or more. The largest number of *sūktas* in the Rig Veda are sung in praise of Agni and Indra. Other Gods like Varuṇa, Rudra, Mitra, Maruts, etc., have only very few *sūktas* in comparison with Agni and Indra. From the time of the Rig Veda till today Agni is an object of worship in India. While the vaidikas worshipped God in the homāgni, even the lowest backward man will have at least the flame of a country lamp lighted in reverence on special days like marriage, New Year's day, naming the child and similar other occasions. Though the visible Agni is thus divinely honoured, from the most ancient times, the term Agni was used pregnantly to denote God symbolically. The very first verse of the Rig Veda '*agnimīḍe purohitam yajñasya devam ṛtvijam hotāram ratnadhātamam*' expresses this idea. 'I praise Agni whom I place before all. Agni who is the God to whom worship is offered, who is the offerer of the worship, who sings the chant in the sacrifice and who is the giver and repository of the blessings we covet.' It is a general principle of exposition established in Brahmasutras that wherever the attributes, qualities and description of God are found we are to take God represented directly or indirectly by the context. In Brahmasutras 1-1-24 to 27 called *Jyotischaranādhikaraṇa* it is established that the term jyotis, tejas, etc., stand for Brahman. We find in the Rig Veda Mantras on Agni descriptions which can apply only to the Divine Principle. In the Upaniṣads we meet with statements such as *itiśuśruma pūrveṣām ye nastadvyacacakṣire* (thus we have heard from our ancient teachers who have explained to us this truth). Such statements make clear that the truths contained in the Upaniṣads were already known to still earlier ancestors. They could not have been invented by them. Swami Vivekananda who looked at the developments of religious ideas from the evolutionary view point at times admitted in his lecture on 'Maya and evolution of the conception of God' delivered in London on 20th October, 1896, 'that in Reality all the ideas which are developed in the Upaniṣad are to be fou already in the Samhitas in some form or othe We have already seen that this position h been reinforced by Sri Aurobindo, Edgert A. K. Coomaraswamy and others. Althou the large number of Rig Vedic mantras devo ed to Agni describe fire as worshipped b them, we find occasionally in the insight some Rishis that fire was only a *Pratīka* the supreme Truth. They therefore employe terms such as *amṛta, amṛtānām prathama amṛtasya rakṣitā, prajāpati, devānām deva devānām pitā, janitā rodasyoḥ* (creator heaven and earth), *viśvakarmā, sarvas janakaḥ, viśvadevāḥ*, etc.

(*To be continued*)

OUR NATIONAL IDEALS

SWAMI SIDDHINATHANANDA

Wealth, enjoyment and power are the aims of early life. It is all rosy and pleasant in the morning. Smiles and sweetness are the property of the young. But as the day advances, the shadows deepen and darken. Tears and sighs are normal in the evening. As the afternoon approaches, regrets about the misdeeds of the forenoon crop up; anxiety about the evening assails us. Thoughts about the future and the beyond take hold of us. The young nations of the earth are busy in acquiring treasures on earth; they care not whether the treasures will be moth-eaten later. And they are not very much concerned as to the means they adopt in getting hold of them. These treasures serve them to please their senses. They are content with that at present. But a mature nation looks behind and ahead. It has had many hopes and disappointments. It has become disillusioned. Mere temporal tinsels cannot lure it. Power, military or economic, is not the goal of a mature nation. India counts her age in aeons. Religion and philosophy are her preoccupation. God is her gift to the world. Light starts from the East.

A mature nation that she is, she thought life in its entirety; not merely about the h and now, but also about the other world a the future. Her thinkers thought many thin and discovered many things. What is life, a why, they enquired. The results of their r search in this fundamental aspect have co down to us. This legacy of their wisdom known as the Vedas.

Life is inexplicable purely within the bou of the world, within space and time, wit the five senses. Life on earth is only a re house on the soul's march forward. We ha to get back home. We have to return fro where we started. Whence did we fare fort From God. No other answer is satisfacto for everything else is contrary to the experie of those who have seriously grappled with t question. The original source of this app rently infinite panorama of the Universe a the inscrutable soul of man cannot be an thing less than the Infinite. Man's aspirati cannot be quenched by anything finite. the goal of man is regaining this lost parad

Other ends of life such as acquisition of wealth and enjoyment are permissible in so far as they do not compromise this final goal. They are only means to this end. If they are pursued as ends in themselves, they will wreck life. For they are temporal, mundane and therefore ephemeral. Life is too valuable to be wasted on such frivolities. Once this fact is recognised, our inordinate clinging to the life of the senses will get loosened. Renunciation of the ego and its progeny will commence. Ours is a land where the hands that wielded the sceptre have gladly put it away and taken up the begging bowl. Many ancient rulers ended their lives as hermits.

Because we aim at the Eternal, our religion is called Sanātana Dharma, the Eternal Religion. Other ideals are small, changing. Freedom of the soul is our goal. Our institutions, education, code of conduct and traditions are all shaped in such a way as to serve this primary demand. What is the gain for society in general of nurturing and nourishing the individual to attain his liberation? Society is only an aggregate of individuals. So, in the final analysis, the benefit of society means benefit for other individuals. When man is up against insoluble riddles, when his heart is weighed down with aches and worries, when he finds himself in helpless situations, when everything he had held on to, slips through his fingers, when he is unable to find the meaning of life, when he is about to be driven mad, there come the soft and gentle words of hope and consolation from the lips of the wise one, 'Fear not, my son, there is a sure way out of this perilous deep. I shall show thee the path which the ancient sages have trodden.' In the hour of humanity's bitter disappointment, if there is one who can with sympathy and conviction, take away its load of grief and pain, is that not the greatest boon a man can confer on his fellow-beings? To qualify oneself for this supreme task of calling one and all that are heavy laden to come and unburden themselves, is that not the greatest good that one can render to others? That Son of God provides humanity with hope and example. So individual freedom is in itself welfare of the many. Atmamoksha is Jagathita.

The Prince of Kapilavastu found life ridden with anguish and agony. The sight of a man of renunciation gave him hope and the key to the solution of life's riddle. Suppose India had no such ideal, that the Prince could not get any suggestion of a solution; what would have been the fate of a man in such a situation? Either, he will go mad, or, he will hang himself. That is what happens to many a frustrated life which is unable to find this anchor of renunciation. Narendra, who was a sceptic, was transformed into a Vivekananda by the touch of the Priest of the Kali Temple at Dakshineswar. These seers of Truth are the Salt of the Earth, the Light of the World. They are the real benefactors of mankind. Humanity may pass through any and every kind of transformation and revolution, but a Rama, a Krishna, a Buddha, a Christ, a Ramakrishna, the Gītā, the Dhammapada, the New Testament, the Gospel of Ramakrishna, these will survive all cataclysms. For, they supply man with the solution for the most fundamental and intricate problem that confronts him, viz. the meaning and purpose of life. Those who have acquired peace will distribute peace. They make life bearable and livable.

A Hindu's life is so graded as to enable him to embrace total renunciation in the evening of life. Fasts and vigils, pilgrimages, vows, acts of charity are the primary lessons of complete self-surrender. A house-holder is expected to feed the dog and the outcaste before he eats. Study of the scriptures, worship of the departed, and hospitality to guests are incumbent duties of a common man. Our law-givers took care to lay down that man in all stages of growth should discharge his duties towards society. So, it will not be correct to say that in the Hindu order of society, social obligations were neglected for the sake of individual liberation. But, it must also be added, the stress was on liberation. Till the time of Swami Vivekananda that was the state of affairs. One consequence of this is the lack of organization in our society. Swamiji's contribution is raising the service of man to a place of honour without detriment to the ideal of renunciation.

There is a passage in the Rig Veda (VIII. 79. 12) wherein God is depicted as one who clothes the unclad, heals the ailing, gives sight to the blind, and enables the lame to walk. The Blessed One exhorted his disciples to go forth to the four corners of the globe for the good of the many, for the welfare of the many, out of sympathy for fellow beings. Buddhist rulers built hospitals not only for mankind but for the dumb brothers as well. All the same it was the genius of Swamiji that raised service to the position of an end in itself.

How did Swamiji arrive at it? The contributing factors are many. His Master through his spiritual insight saw all beings as so many tabernacles of the one blissful Lord of the Universe. This was a rediscovery of the truth of the Upaniṣadic statement that, all this is enveloped and interpenetrated by God. Application of this Advaitic vision is the service of man. It is its natural corollary.

Mathur Babu took Sri Ramakrishna on a pilgrimage to Benares. At a wayside station the party disembarked. Sri Ramakrishna was moved at the sight of the poor people around. He asked Mathur to feed them and distribute clothes among them. Mathur hesitated a little because of the heavy expenditure involved. Ramakrishna sat among the poor folk and refused to go on pilgrimage until his demand was fulfilled. Mathur fed them and then the party proceeded to Benares. Yes, Sri Ramakrishna put into practice his vision of God in everything.

During his wanderings Swami Vivekananda saw the real condition of the Indian masses. The picture was dismal. The masses had no food to eat, no raiment to wear; they had to bless or blame their fate when ailments assailed them. Education was a far cry. An empty stomach is no place for religion. Poverty is perpetual death. The head will be clear and steady only when the stomach is full. Then it says to the head, 'Sing fellow.' Then w dawn interest in higher pursuits. To wipe t widow's tears, to soothe the orphan's wails, t provide food to the hungry mouths, this se vant of God-in-man crossed the seas. bickering, subject India had no self-respec she was helpless. There was no enthusias for any constructive, united action. She w basely imitating the West in everything. Th problem this Son of India took upon hims was the rousing of the nation from its lo stupor of lethargy.

He had a plan for it. He would give to t West the invaluable treasures of the Spi which India had in abundance, and in retu get from the West material goods. He pav the way for this exchange between the E and the West. India had forgotten her o glories. Only those things that came fr beyond the seas had any value; even in re gion this was the state of affairs. The pro perous and powerful West accorded a war welcome to this teacher of Eastern spirituali This opened India's eyes. The fact that Indian was accepted as teacher in El Dora helped India regain her own sense of self-re pect. Swamiji saw that the secret of succ of the Western nations lay in their capacity co-operate and organize. While in the We he once sprang a surprise on his hostess announcing that he had fallen in love. T hostess enquired who that fortunate bea was. 'It is not a lady, Madam, it is Orga zation' was his reply.

He learnt the necessity of organization. exhorted his followers through inspiring lett to band themselves together and work for welfare of the masses. Individual effort, ho ever intense and earnest, will be very limit A river in spate will work havoc. But if flo water is diverted through proper channels, can produce light, irrigate fields, and slake thirst of beings. Of renunciation, there w surfeit in India. It must be canalised for material and spiritual uplift of the comm man. 'It is not religion that we want; we have enough and to spare. What we w is food for the body,' he told the peoples the West. So India's primary problem is food. His solution of the problem is education. 'There is no problem that cannot be solved by that magic word, education,' he said. Give the people education and they will solve their problems themselves. Give the masses, especially women, the light of knowledge and leave them to themselves.

India is the spiritual lamp of the world. If that light were to go out due to poverty the loss would be immense and universal. It is in the interest of the whole world as much as her own that India should rise and shed this beacon-light of the Immortal in man. It is the realization of this vital role India plays in the universal scheme that made Swami Vivekananda passionately attached to India. For, if India died, the world would be dark. So he dedicated himself to her service. 'So long as a dog remains without food in my land, to feed it is my religion. All else is irreligion or no religion,' he said. The old religion said, 'Let thy teacher be thy God, let thy father be thy God, let thy mother be thy God.' This new seer declared, 'Let the ignorant be thy God, let the poor, the illiterate, the ailing be thy God.' 'Are these not Gods, the forms of the Virat? Forsaking the visible Gods, where goest thou in search of God?' he asked. 'I will hurl him into eternal hell, who hates Me residing in other beings,' said Sri Krishna. Swami Vivekananda reiterated it. 'He who worships the Lord only in the image and not in His devotees and others is a crude devotee,' says the Bhagavata (11. 3. 47). 'I do not care for terrestrial domain; I hanker not for Heaven; I seek not even salvation. The removal of the misery of those that are frying in grief, is the only thing I care for,' says again a devotee in the Bhagavata. Swami Vivekananda sang this anew.

His heart was softer than butter; for, butter melts only when it is heated; but the Swami's heart melted at the sight of misery in others. He was a true representative of India, nay, he was India embodied. He felt proud in her spiritual and cultural achievements; he grieved at her subjection. His soul was in agony at her degradation. He smarted at the insults the foreigners heaped upon her humble head. He thought of her past glories; felt anxious about the future; visualized a bright future for her; discovered her mistakes and drawbacks and found out a way to correct the mistakes and to build a glorious future. A band of young men fired with the ideal of renunciation and the service of their fellow beings must come forward and dedicate themselves for this noble cause. The hungry must be fed. The ignorant must be educated. The blind of soul must be enlightened. Yes, renunciation and service are the national ideals of India. If she is firmly established in these once again she will become a real Mahā-Bhārata, a glorious India, as of yore. He gave a practical shape to this ideal in establishing the Ramakrishna Order with its motto of personal salvation and service of humanity.

Swami Vivekananda took upon himself the task of India's national advancement and spiritual enlightenment. To realize that end, he started the twin organizations, the Ramakrishna Mission and the Ramakrishna Math. The Math or monastery prepares the individual in the life of self-denial and Self-Realization. The Mission works for the public weal. The Math is for monks. The Mission provides a forum for both the monks and the laity to work in co-operation for the social good. Through these two institutions, the aspirant embraces a life of renunciation for the attainment of liberation and serves fellowmen. Service is both a means and an end. For the aspirant it is a means of reaching perfection. To the perfected it is only a natural outcome of his same-sightedness. It is not service of man; it is the service of God in man. Thus it becomes a devotional duty.

Social service has its pitfalls. The servant in course of time craves for recognition and approbation. The agent wants to gain supremacy. If service is made an act of worship, one escapes these bondages; not only that, service itself takes one to the highest goal in life. That is how 'dexterity in action' becomes a spiritual discipline. Every act must be made an act of worship of the Cosmic Soul.

Sri Ramakrishna scaled the highest pinnacles of spirituality through renunciation and showers on humanity the ambrosia of peace and blessedness. Swami Vivekananda tasted the bliss and sweetness of this renunciation and discovered this application of the Advaita to help man rediscover his glory. The Ramakrishna Order puts into practice the founder's vision by accepting service as an end as well as a means thereunto.

Man has a body, a mind and a soul. All the three must be nourished. Hospitals and dispensaries relieve physical and mental ailments; orphanages, relief activities and poor-homes provide food for the body. Libraries, schools and colleges train the mind. Technical and industrial concerns provide people with ways and means of earning their livelihood. Publication of religious literature, spiritual discourses, worship and celebrations help the spiritual growth. Thus the goal of the order is the all-round development of the society as a whole as well as that of the individual.

When Mother India was lying prostrate the feet of the foreign conquerors, immers in dense darkness, it was the genius of Swa Vivekananda that discovered the cause of malady, prescribed and administered remed for them and thus woke her up to a sense self-respect and made her feel proud of past glories. Yes, it was Swami Vivekana that sounded the clarion call that roused ancient land. He rejuvenated India.

He saw in his vision a glorious India, soci and industrially advanced without losing si of her eternal values. We are now celebrat the birth centenary of a great Son of In whose heart lacerated at the miseries of dumb millions, who dedicated his whole for the uplift of his countrymen, felt proud of the culture and spiritual herit of his Motherland and who endeavoured send out waves of peace and benediction the whole world. His works are being publi ed in all the major Indian languages. Hi the voice of Indian spirit. And only spirit save matter from corruption. 'Renuncia and service are the national ideals of Ind he said. Let us hearken to his words and blessed.

A WANDERING MONK WHO PREACHED HUMAN UNITY

(SWAMI VIVEKANANDA 1863-1902)

ABINASH CHANDRA BOSE

When at the Parliament of Religions which met at Chicago in September, 1893, Swami Vivekananda, the young Sannyasin from India, who was only thirty at that time, stood up in his ochre robe and began his address with the words, 'Sisters and Brothers of America', he struck a new note that pleased his audience. He suggested that though he came from the far end of the earth and professed a religion different from that of his listeners, he still thought he had a bond of kinship with them. In fact, this was an important part of message to the first international assembly representatives of different religions. Contr to the belief that the followers of one's religion only were bound by fraternal ties, people outside the fold were unworthy of s relationship, the Swami thought that the ference of religion did not wipe out the ship between man and man. In his speec in the Parliament of Religions and outside U.S.A., and later in England, the Swami great stress on this universality of human relationship, irrespective of one's religious affiliation.

He derived his philosophy from the ancient Indian tradition, relived and restated by sages and saints, generation after generation. Among the latest of the saints was his Guru (spiritual preceptor) Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa (1836-1886) who, living an ascetic life in the neighbourhood of Calcutta, wielded a great influence on a section of the English-educated intellectuals of the city. Narendranath Datta, as Vivekananda was called in his pre-monastic days, met Sri Ramakrishna for the first time at the age of eighteen. As an undergraduate at Calcutta University, he had imbibed the new Western ideas, based on science and reason, but a profound inquisitiveness led him to seek sufficient evidence before he accepted whatever science and reason could not know, regarded as unknowable. He confronted the Paramahamsa (a term designating the saint of the highest spiritual realization) with a challenge. To his great surprise Ramakrishna took it up. Narendra was slowly led to the full conviction that Truth had a greater depth and wider sweep than science or reason could cover. Narendra became the Guru's chief disciple and was initiated into Advaita Vedanta, spiritual monism, with the highest ascetic discipline, and was blessed with the realization that the Divine resided within man, and in the ultimate sense the Divinity and the soul of man were identical. This, Sri Ramakrishna taught, was the essence of all religions. According to this concept, charity was not patronage but worship of God in man, or, rather, of man as God. This exaltation of man gave the young humanist a nobler ideal than his own —that of a transcendent humanism. Ramakrishna emphasized this aspect of Advaitism and wished his disciple to forego personal happiness, derived even from a life of spiritual exaltation, and dedicate himself to the service of men, leading them from fear, hatred and conflict, to manliness, love and harmony. Before passing away (on 16 August, 1886) Sri Ramakrishna placed his other disciples in charge of Narendra.

Having spent four years in organizing them into a Monastic Order, and settling them in a Math (monastery) near the city (of Calcutta), Swami Vivekananda took up Parivrājya, the Sannyasin's wandering life, accepting food and shelter from any one who offered them, irrespective of caste or creed or race. He left Calcutta in the middle of 1890 and moved through Bihar and eastern U.P. to the Himalayas, and down to Delhi. From there he passed on to Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Kerala, and then to Madras. From Madras he travelled to Hyderabad (Deccan) and back. He accepted hospitality from prince and peasant alike, and starved when it was not available. He went on foot unless somebody bought a railway ticket for him, where there was a railway, for some distance. His wanderings in India lasted for about three years. In many places he was visited by people of different classes and creeds and asked questions. He answered them and held discourses on religion. The wanderer surprised everybody he met by his manly figure, his handsome appearance, his noble bearing, his serenity and his vast knowledge. He expressed himself with equal eloquence in English, Sanskrit and Bengali, and spoke these and Hindi (the common language of Sannyasins) according to the needs of the situation.

When he was at the land's end in Kanyakumari (Cape Comorin), he crossed over to the small rocky island near the shore and stood there looking at the country he had traversed from end to end. He reviewed his journey within his mind and thought proudly of the great Indian spiritual tradition carried on through the ages by the people and of their innate sense of high values. But he found himself afflicted with the memory of the crushing poverty of the village people, who made up the bulk of the Indian population, of their ignorance, their helplessness, and, worst of all, their despair. He came to the conclusion that what these people needed was not religion but material progress and education and only then they could attend to higher interests of life. He resolved to do whatever he could to remove their abject poverty.

It had been suggested to him that he should attend the Parliament of Religions that was to be held in U.S.A. in 1893. Now he thought he could go to America and seek the help of that rich country for the poor masses of India. Another inducement was that he would be continuing the Sannyasin's wandering life across the seas. He accepted the help offered him by the people and sailed for America in May, 1893, and reached U.S.A. *via* Hongkong, Japan and Canada. He had to face many difficulties including shortage of funds, but surmounted them all, to some extent by sheer luck, and attended the Parliament of Religions as a representative of Hinduism. He began well, as stated above, and received very high appreciation from his audience. In one of his early lectures he told the Americans that the crying need 'in the east is not religion — they have enough religion — but it is bread.' He also said : 'I came here to seek aid for my impoverished people.' He spoke of his disappointment, too.

The response of the American people to his lectures not only within but also outside the Parliament of Religions and after the Parliament had closed was so encouraging that he decided to continue them. By arrangement with a lecture bureau he took up an intensive programme of lecturing at different places in the eastern States, on a rather modest royalty. Later he arranged the lectures independently with the help of devoted admirers. To this group belonged J. J. Goodwin, an Englishman, who took down the lectures in short-hand, and thus supplied him with notes for volumes of books. (Later he followed the Swami to India and died there). In his lectures Vivekananda interpreted Vedanta with its bearing on the individual and social life of men and women. From the Vedantic point of view the soul was sexless, and woman was as much divine as man, and had the same spiritual path open before her. American women, who were slowly winning their emancipation, particularly appreciated this aspect of his philosoph While he accepted every religion excludi their anti-social ideas and action, he ma it clear that his acceptance was not mere to rance. He found the ultimate basis of religi to lie in the realization of God within hims by man and the establishment of perfect equ lity and harmony with other men (and at t highest stage, with all other beings) on t basis of this realization. He struggled agai all forms of narrowness in man's religion a social relationship. In a letter of August, 18 to an American disciple he says : 'Doubtle I love India. But every day my sight gro clearer. What is India or England or Ameri to us ? We are the servants of that God w by the ignorant is called MAN.' To a broth disciple, he wrote : 'See that universality not hampered in any way. Everything must sacrificed, if necessary, for that one sentime *universality*.' He wanted self-sacrificing you men of India 'to try to revive society on t old grounds of universal salvation and equ lity as laid down by the old Masters, such Śankarāchārya, Rāmānuja and Chaitanya.' opposed all forms of coercion, and declare 'Liberty is the first condition of growth.' felt the pulse of the Western world and g a warning in one of his later letters : 'Y must take care not to set up class strife b ween the poor peasants, the labouring peo and the moneyed classes.'

He was in England in the later half of 1 and returned to U.S.A. in December. worked with renewed energy. But his he was failing and he found the growing st on him very exhausting. He was in Engl again in April 1896, and found his 'w going silently but surely.' In a letter he s about his inner life : 'I feel that I mu every one, every thing, love and embr thing.'

For some time the Swami was in Swit land, taking rest. He returned to England Germany. He thought travel in the West wo do good to Indians. 'As soon as a man co to the West and sees different nations, his e open. I wish at least a million Hindus travelled all over the world.' He planned 'to send numbers of Hindu boys to every civilized country to preach — get men and women from foreign countries to work in India. This would be a good exchange.' He found the work in London 'going apace.' He stayed in England almost to the end of 1896. He took a boat at Naples for Ceylon where he arrived on 14 January, 1897. He received a hero's welcome and had a triumphal progress from Colombo to Almora (in the Himalayas), addressing vast gatherings on the way.

Vivekananda was now faced with the task of making what he called practical Vedanta prevail in India. In a letter to an educated Indian lady he says : 'India will awake only when hundreds of large-hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert for the well-being of the millions of their countrymen who are gradually sinking lower and lower in the vortex of destitution and ignorance.' During the five years that remained of his life he worked hard, in spite of failing health, to establish the Ramakrishna Mission on a secure foundation, and to initiate educational and social service activities under it with the all-renouncing Sannyasins of the Order at their helm. Renunciation and Service became two great pillars of the Advaita Vedanta preached by Swami Vivekananda. The response of the monks was fine. Writing to Margaret Noble, his Anglo-Irish disciple who dedicated herself to the service of India and was aptly renamed Nivedita, the Dedicated, the Swami says : 'I have sent some of my boys to work in the famine districts. It has acted like a miracle.'

He went out on a second and a parting visit to England and America in July 1899. This time in U.S.A. he lectured in the western States. From there he came to France and attended the Congress of the History of Religions in Paris. Unlike the Chicago Parliament of Religions, this Congress was dominated by academic 'experts' whose interpretation of facts, and speculation, when no facts were definitely known, superseded actual religious belief and practice, especially of those outside their own fold. Vivekananda who was invited to give his opinion on a paper containing speculations about certain forms of Hindu worship strongly criticized it, citing evidence to the contrary. He also defended Islam against a certain critic.

At this time, Swamiji took certain important steps to strengthen the legal position of the Ramakrishna Mission and make it work independently. He wrote from France in August, 1900 : 'Now I am free, as I have no power or authority or position for me in the work. I have also resigned the Presidentship of the Ramakrishna Mission.' He did some 'wandering' in Europe, visiting Athens and Constantinople (Isthanbul), and then Lebanon and after that Egypt. And, rather suddenly, he took a boat for India, and made a surprise return to Belur Math.

He now visited parts of India like East Bengal and Assam which had not been included in his earlier itinerary. What he now planned to do was, as he had stated some time earlier, 'to see my machine in working order, and then knowing sure that I have put in a lever for the good of humanity, in India at least, which no power can drive back, I will sleep.' He passed away during deep meditation on July 4, 1902.

In a letter from Switzerland he had told a disciple : 'Work on unto death — I am with you, and when I am gone, my spirit will work with you.' His spirit lives in the words he spoke and wrote and inspires men and women, young and old, with a new vision of ancient truths and a new sense of life's abiding values.

SRI SANKARA : INDIA'S GREAT PHILOSOPHER

P. NAGARAJA RAO

In a world where one half lacks a coherent faith and the other half has the regimented faith i.e. communism based on dialectical materialism, class conflict, and the deterministic theory of man and his nature, the philosophy of Śankara has an irresistible appeal to the man of reason and to the children of science. It is the philosophy for our times, which would ensure for us sane living. The function and the role of religion is being increasingly questioned. Its relevance to our life today is disputed. The different cults, and the denominational religions cut no ice. They make for division and conflict. Sceptical minds cry out, 'Does it pay to be religious ?' Those who burn with a sense of social justice and abundant humanity and compassion for all, feel that religion as practised today by the different cults and the professional hypocrisies, is worthless at its best and vicious at its less best. Many justify the existing social evils of the day in the name of religion. We have religions that are frankly anti-humanistic and anti-rational. Many ask us to surrender our soul and be saved. In short most of the denominational and sectarian cults have no sympathy with the social aspirations of men and do not satisfy the demands of logic nor the requirements of humanity and care not to foster world unity. All these defects have no place in the rational religion of Advaita.

Dr. Radhakrishnan's estimate of Śankara sums up the excellence of his thought :

> 'Supreme as a philosopher and a dialectician, great as a man of calm judgment and wide toleration, Sankara taught us to love Truth, respect Reason and realize the purpose of life.... He destroyed many an old dogma, not by violently attacking it, but by quietly suggesting something more reasonable which was at the same time more spiritual too.'

Commenting on his method, the masterly English translator of Śankara's *Sūtra bhāṣya* Dr. Thibaut remarks in his erudite introdu tion :

> 'Sankara's method enables him to recognize existing differences which other systematizers intent on obliterating. And there has yet to made a more *important admission* in favour his system. It is not only more pliable, m capable of amalgamating heterogeneous materi than other systems, but its fundamental doctri are manifestly in greater harmony with the essen teachings of the Upanishads than those of ot systems. ...The task of reducing the teaching the whole of the Upanishads to a system con tent and free from contradictions is an intri cally impossible one. But the task being giv we are quite ready to admit, that Sankara's syst is most probably the best that can be devised.'

The imposing metaphysical system of Ś kara is hailed as the peer to those of Ka Plato and Hegel in the West by great thinke e.g., Deussen and Max Mueller. The orient list Daniel H. H. Ingalls describes Śankar works :

> 'The method in the hands of Sankara aff one almost as a great physical act of cour The boldness is astounding, as the sonorous p in which it is set is fascinating. If one has t of grandeur ; if one relishes for example the po of Lucretius with "its flaming walls of the u verse" one cannot be unmoved by the sono prose of Sankara where these flaming walls tur down.'

The method adopted is best described 'the progressive discovery of truth.' Śankar method is unique. His method is critical a dialectical. He passes in review the positi taken up by other systems and criticizes th after expounding their standpoint in full, w an expertness and impartiality which the v upholder of the system cannot do. In t process of the criticism he never fails to n the varying fullness, the philosophical wo and the logical acumen of other systems. T lower is criticized in the light of the higher which it finds its fulfilment.

Tradition hails the advent of Śankara as the very *avatāra*, the incarnation of Śiva. In the *Śankara Vijaya* we have a verse, proclaiming the advent and the mission of Śankara's life :

> 'The great Siva had assumed the form of Dakshinamurti to impart philosophic wisdom through silence under a celebrated banyan tree. This prince of taciturnity, in order to save all the people lost in the forest of ignorance, scorched by the flames of forest-fire of samsara, out of abundant compassion rose from his seat, broke his silence, and chose to walk on earth in the person of Sankaracharya.'[1]

Śankara appeared at a time similar to ours. The ritualists called Mimamsakas, filled their hour with hectic ritual and propitiation of the multiple Gods to secure property, progeny and health here and perpetual pleasure in the hereafter. The hedonism preached by this school made them forget humanity and made them individual egotists. There was the ascetic who was torturing his Self to know the truth. In such an age Śankara the boy-philosopher interpreted the coherent philosophy enshrined in the *Upaniṣads*, Gītā and the *Brahma Sūtras*, revealing the Upaniṣadic Philosophy of the unity of existence, the fellowship of faiths, the dignity and divinity of man ; the basis of human compassion, i.e., the oneness of the spirit. He gave the world a 'Philosophy for all Times'.

Sankara was born in 788 A.D. of Nambudiri Brahmin parents Śivaguru and Āryāmba in Kaladi. His parents ardently prayed for his birth to the Lord in Trichur temple. Śivaguru passed away soon after the boy was born. Śankara early in life evinced precocious mastery of all Vedic lore and the different branches of ancient wisdom. In conformity with tradition he was initiated into Brahmacharya, which is regarded as the second birth. It was prophesied that the child would live only for eight years. The fascination for *sannyāsa* was deep in the future world-teacher.[2] Śankara had not the usual hankering for the satisfaction of the pleasures of the senses, nor for the exercise of power or pelf or position. He had an intense reflective turn of mind and possessed an indrawn personality. He had a mission and an ideal becoming him and directing him. He had no time to waste or luxuriate in the trifles of life.

Tradition records an incident which gives us a powerful insight into Śankara's love of sannyāsa. The boy went to his village river for his daily bath and a crocodile caught hold of his feet. The boy cried out to his mother to grant him permission to renounce the world and take to *sannyāsa* ; for the acceptance of '*āpat-sannyāsa*' would ensure his life. Śankara went to the banks of Narmada and took orders from Govinda the disciple of the celebrated Gauḍapāda. As a sannyāsin he travelled all over India on foot, impressing on us the fact of the unity of India. He defeated many an opponent and all supporters and expounders of anti-Vedic and non-Vedic systems of philosophy. He went to Badari and Varanasi, got his memorable commentary on the Vedanta Sūtras approved by Vyāsa. He established different Maths all over India.

His works run into twenty volumes (memorial edition printed in Srirangam Vani Vilas Press). They can be classified into four distinct sections : (A) Commentaries : (1) on the Brahma Sūtra, (2) 12 principal Upaniṣads, (3) Gita, (4) Viṣṇusahasranāma, Sanat Sujatiya etc. (B) Independent tracts on philosophical topics explaining the system of ideas according to Advaita. (C) A series of poems explaining Advaita in one verse, in ten and in a hundred. (D) Devotional poems describing the path of the bhakta in adoration of Śakti, Viṣṇu, Subrahmanya etc. His commentaries are known for their metaphysical brilliance and poetic excellence. They are clear yet deep (*prasanna gambhīram*), penetrating as well as broad-based. It is only Śankara's humility that makes him name his works as commentaries. They are not mere notes or annotations, but treatises that discuss and illuminate the mind and purify the hearts of men. It is his style that has earned him a permanent place among the philosophic Sanskrit prose writers.

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[1] *ājnānāntar-gahana-patitān ātma-vidyopadeśaiḥ*
trātum lokān bhava davasikhā-tāpa-papaccya mānān
muktvā-maunam-vaṭaviṭapino mūlato niṣpatanti
śambhor mūrtiścarati bhuvané śankarācārya rupé

[2] Of the four *āshramas sannyāsa* is the best-fitted for spreading dharma and knowledge of the spirit. Other āshramas are committed to definite duties. The brahmacharin is bound to live in permanent proximity to the guru, and so cannot go about from place to place. The gṛhasta has to tend his family and receive guests and look after them. The *vānaprastha* dwells in the forests and spends his days in tapas. It is the privilege of the *parivrajaka* to wander from place to place to bring light to people and have no fixed habitation.

The philosophy of Śankara has to be viewed from three points : (1) It is a system of ideas. (2) It is a distinct integrated view of life. (3) Śankara is a spiritual guide who has travelled for us the way of spiritual life. The philosophy of Śankara is described as Absolute Idealism in the West. Śankara affirms the unity of existence as Spirit, infinite, non-composite, homogeneous Brahman. Brahman is *Sat*, *Chit* and *Ananda* (reality, intelligence and bliss). These constitute its essence (*svarūpa lakṣaṇa*). They are not attributes. There is nothing real besides Brahman for us to describe it. All is Brahman. Brahman is Absolute, second-less (*ekam eva advitīyam*). If there is anything different from Brahman, or other than Brahman, then Brahman cannot be 'Absolute'. Differences and distinction are only compatible with what is finite and not with what is infinite. It does not undergo any change (*vikāra*) e.g., birth, growth, decay and death. It is immutable perfection (*kūtastha nitya*). It is the plenitude of Being. It cannot be described in terms of discursive reasoning or relational modes of knowledge ; for it is not an object of knowledge or other objects pitted against a subject. Though it cannot be intellectually described, it can be experienced in spiritual realization. Its existence can be ascertained from the scriptures. Reasoning establishes its probability. Śankara asserts the existence of Brahman on tri authorities, Scripture, experience and logic.

Though Brahman cannot be directly know he can be pointed to and described negativ or indirectly. All the Scriptural descriptic attempt to give indirect definition of Brahm (*tatastha lakṣaṇa*). When Brahman is de cribed as *sat*, what is sought to be indicated that it is not unreal (*anṛta*), when describ as *chit*, inertness is denied about it, when de cribed as *ānanda*, the nature of misery denied about it. Brahman is regarded as t root cause of all creations. Here too Śanka strikes an original path. Perfection i.e., Bra man does not create the world or get its transformed into the world of plurality. T world is not a product or *vikāra* (transform tion of Brahman), but is the appearan (*vivarta*) of Brahman. Brahman appears the world of Matter and Soul. The real of the world is Brahman. But for Brahm there will be no world-appearance. But t relationship is not reciprocal. It is a on sided causation. Hence, no defect of the wo touches Brahman. This world appearance due to Māyā. Māyā is what is not — *yā m* Māyā hides Brahman and shows up in place the world. It is a complex activity suppression and substitution. It projects wh is not. All our activities including the spi tual are possible and are sustained only if have the separatist illusion. Otherwise activity will come to a standstill. We do n know, how or when we got this illusion. N body walks into an illusion knowing it to an illusion. Then it is no longer an illusio Māyā is beginningless (*anādi*) but it can put an end to. Hence, it is not eternal, wi the result Brahman alone is eternal. Whatev is a product of Māyā is indeterminable as re or unreal, nor can it be a combination of t real and unreal. It is *anirvacaniya* in ter of the real and unreal. As long as this mā is there, one is sure to experience conflict a competition and nurse the feelings mine a thine. In short it is this *avidyā*, this *dva bhrānti* that stands in the way of the reali tion of the *advaya-bhāva* i.e., the *sarva-āt* *bhāva.* Only the realization of the unity of existence can bring about fellowship among men and amity between the different creeds. Śankara's clarion call is to realize the oneness of the Self in all. Such a realization can be achieved by the true knowledge of the Self. It is there. It is not a production, like an action. It is not a place of resort to which we have to travel. It is not a transformation. In short, it is not *utpādya, āpya,* or *samskārya.* It is the *Sahaja-avastha* (the true nature of the soul) which is to be realized. It is to be revealed. Hence it is called Self-realization. Karma and Bhakti are contributory to it. Ceremonial purity cleanses the doors of perception and prepares the soul for the vision. If the window panes are dirty, we cannot see clearly. Hence the need for *ātma śuddhi.* We should listen to the scriptural truths through the *upadesha* of an enlightened guru that is, *śravaṇa.* The truths taught by the Guru have to be pondered over for a time examining their *pros* and *cons,* to get at the conviction of the truth, that is *manana.* We must continue to meditate on the Vedantic *mahā-vākyas,* till we experience them in our very person, here and now, that is *nididhyāsana.* Bhakti is the exercise in the process of self-identification with the Lord and the process of dissolving the ego. Śankara in his *Śivānanda Lahari* describes the bhakti of the celebrated Śaiva hunter saint Kannappar: 'The contact of the worn out shoe gave immense pleasure to Shiva's body, the water brought in the mouth became the ceremonial bath, the swine's flesh which had been tasted before it was offered became his delicious food, what will not bhakti do? Lo! the barbarian became the best among the bhaktas.'[3]

Sankara does not down-grade Bhakti. He is a great Bhakta. The Absolute of Śankara appears when viewed in relation to the world as God i.e., Īśvara. He is the creator, sustainer etc. of the world. The world is not a product of mere material forces, nor is it the accidental collocation of atoms, nor is it the evolution of an insentient Nature. It is the work of Īśvara. Īśvara is *saguṇa* Brahman. The *nirguṇa* Brahman and *saguṇa* Brahman are not two, nor are they anti-thetical. Without worship of the personal God, Advaita realization becomes difficult. Not by ignoring God, do we reach the Absolute, but by worshipping and transcending worship we realize mokṣa. It is not correct to describe Śankara as an atheist. If anything he is a super-theist. Śankara has great respect for *sampradāya,* tradition. He does not want to break from them violently. He claims no originality for his majestic system, but declares, that his system is a synthesis or systematization of the doctrines in the triple texts.

He believes above all in the dignity and freedom of man to overcome any limitation. He identifies the individual Soul with Brahman. The essence or the Soul in man is not the body, nor, the mind, nor a complex of elements and koshas. It is not the sense-organs. It is not mere thought or intellect. It is not the transmigrating soul which is the agent of action and the enjoyer of fruits. In essence it is non-different from Brahman. The Soul of man is not a banished stranger, but is Brahman. *Ātma ca Brahma, Tat Tvam Asi, Aham Brahma asmi, prajñānam Brahma.* This experience was the rediscovery of Sri Śankara. It is this message that constitutes his title to undying fame, as the *jagad Guru,* the *ācārya* of the world. He summarised his entire philosophy in half a verse affirming the truth of three propositions : (1) The Reality of Brahman (2) the non-reality of the world, (3) the non-difference of the individual soul from Brahman.

The greatness of Śankara consists in his world-view and his conception of human nature. Two very different conceptions of human life are struggling for the mastery of the world based on different conceptions of human nature. The militant atheistic creeds regard man as a puppet in the grip of mechanical, economic and psychological forces with predictable responses to outer stimuli, others of this creed regard him as a futile passion. His freewill is denied and history is described as the working out of a machine. They believe that man is determined by economic and other forces. Some alarmists of this school do not believe that human nature can change. The leopard cannot change its spots. They despair. The other view is that man is essentially good and divine. He is not only perfectible and educable but is perfection under limitation. Śankara takes the second view and does not despair about man. His spiritualism is humanistic. He affirms the integrality of Man and God and sounds the spiritual note. His catholic outlook does not regard other religions as his rivals, nor does he look upon them as material for reclamation. He regards all religions as alternate approaches to one and the same Reality, differences arising from the temperame distinctions. Only if all men are basic equal in essence, can we command that t be treated as equals in one another's eye equally respected. 'There cannot be hap ness for any of us until it is won for Nothing can integrate mankind at all levels the *Sarvātma bhāva* proclaimed by Sank When our faith is drooping in the efficacy eternal values, Śankara has held it up for by his message of hope.

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[3] मार्गावर्तित पादुका पशुपतेरङ्गस्य कूर्चायते ।
गण्डूषाम्बुनिषेचनं पुररिपोर्दिव्याभिषेकायते ।
किञ्चिद्भक्षित मांससशेषकबलं नव्योपहारायते ।
भक्तिः किं न करोत्यहो वनचरो भक्तावतंसायते ॥

Śankara's fame has found references bey the frontiers of India. A famous inscrip in a dilapidated temple in the jungles of K bodia, belonging to the times of Indra Var reads as follows :

येनाधीतानि शास्त्राणि भगवच्छंकराह्वयात् ।
निश्शेषसूरिमूर्धालिमालालीढाङ्घ्रिपङ्कजात् ।

PERSONALITIES IN THE LIFE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Professor William Hastie : Prof. Hastie was, in 1881, the Principal of the General Assembly's Institution, now known as the Scottish Church College, where Narendranath was a student. It was at this time that Narendra first heard about his future Master by a strange coincidence. Narendra was then studying in the First Arts. Their English Professor being absent, Prof. Hastie took the class on literature. During the course of the lecture while explaining the meaning of trance that occurred in Wordsworth's "Excursion" he found his pupils didn't understand him. He then said to them that it was an experience which came to a pure mind when concentrated on some particular object. He alluded to Ramakrishna Paramahamsa of Dakshineswar as the only person he had seen who experienced such states ; and he added that if they liked to know more about it they could go and see him. This was the strange way in which Narendra heard about his future Master.

Keshab Chandra Sen : (1838-1884) Naren was one of those who were attracted towards the Brahmo Samaj by the 'strength of thou depth of feeling, enthusiasm and personal m netism' of Keshab Chandra Sen who wa those days 'the hero of a thousand platfo and the idol of young Bengal.' Naren wi a short time of attending the Samaj imbued with its ideas.

Surendranath Mitra (Passed away in 18 Surendranath Mitra was a householder dev of Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna to call him as Suresh. He used to invite Master to his house in Simulia (or Sim Calcutta, and arrange little festivals. Na dranath too lived in that part of the city. one such occasion in 1881 Surendra invited Narendra to sing some devotional s before the Master. The Master it is said charmed by his singing. It is also said this was the first meeting of Narendra the Master. Surendranath Mitra was instrumental in the establishment of the mo tery after the passing away of the Master.

(*Continued on Page* 68)

YAJNAVALKYA'S INSTRUCTION TO EMPEROR JANAKA

(DOCTRINE OF TRANSMIGRATION)

M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

Yājñavalkya's instruction to Emperor Janaka is set forth in sections 3 and 4 of the Fourth Chapter of the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.* It comprises two topics, the Ātman as the only source of light and that the jiva is subject to transmigration. The first of these two topics was dealt with in a previous number of this journal.[1] The second relates to a distinctive Hindu doctrine. It is not in any way less important than the first. The importance of the Ātman doctrine is largely metaphysical and to some extent epistemological while that of the doctrine of transmigration is mainly from the ethical point of view. There is nothing corresponding to this in Western philosophy excepting some vague notions in the writings of Pythagoras. In connection with his Doctrine of Ideas, Plato makes mention of the pre and post natal states of the soul, but there is no attempt to develop these hints in a systematic manner, bringing out all their necessary implications. But all schools of Indian Philosophy, with the exception of the Charvaka, subscribe to this doctrine which has come down from the age of the Upaniṣads. Besides the reference in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka,* there is mention of this doctrine in the other Upaniṣads also.[2] In the course of the sage's instruction to Emperor Janaka twelve paragraphs are devoted to the exposition of this doctrine.[3] The *Bṛhadāraṇyaka,* in a later chapter[4] also, reverts to this theme and repeats almost *verbatim* what is stated in Chāndogya V. iii-ix. The Bhagavad Gītā, which is held in high esteem as a Smṛti, makes an implied reference to transmigration in four contexts.[5] It is proposed to bring the ideas contained in these texts together and present them in a systematic manner.

Transmigration means moving from one bodily existence to another. It implies repeated births and deaths. Man is typical of all living beings. They are all mortal in the sense that they have to die sooner or later. This we know from our own experience. But it is said in the authoritative scriptures[6] that they are reborn after every death. Since one has to be going round and round in this cycle, the process is called *samsāra.* Since it is beginningless and, for aught we know, endless, it is frequently likened to the vast expanse of a limitless ocean (*bhava sāgara*). To cross this ocean and attain the blessed state which is no longer subject to rebirth is held by all Indian thinkers as the highest end of life. It is liberation or Mokṣa. Though all thinkers are not agreed as regards the exact nature of Mokṣa, all of them believe that one who has attained this consummation is no longer reborn on earth. According to Yājñavalkya there is no more rebirth for the man whose ignorance is completely eradicated, who has realized his true nature and is wholly merged in Brahman.

To arrive at the realization of one's true nature one has, in the first instance, to know that the finite self (Jiva) is a complex of spirit and matter. The latter appears under many names and forms, the mind, the intellect, the sense-organs, the physical body, the external world and the objects which appeal to our senses. All this come under the category of the non-self (*anātmā*) and, though in everyday life the true self (ātman) is closely bound up with this, yet the wise man has to separate the latter from the former. It is a difficult process and the Upaniṣad[7] says : 'Him (the true self) they should draw out with firmness as (they may do) the rind from a reed.' The Gītā compares the non-self with all its ramifications to an Aśwattha tree whose branches have spread out in all directions and whose roots have gone deep into the heavens. We know neither the origin nor the end of this tree. But 'We must cut down this firm-rooted tree with the strong sword of detachment'.[8] Else there is no salvation for man.

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[1] March, 1963.

[2] Katha V. 7 ; Mundaka III. 2. 2 ; Chand : V. x. 6.

[3] IV. iii. 8-9, 35-38 ; IV. iv. 1-6.

[4] VI. ii.

[5] II. 22 ; VI. 41-45 ; VII. 19 ; VIII. 6.

[6] Katha I. i.6 ; Br. III. ix. 28 ; Bhagavad Gita II. 27 ; Sankara's Mohamudgara 21.

Our attachment to objects of senses will come to an end only when we cease to entertain desire for them. Desire for objects presupposes that they are things which we do not possess and that it is worth our while to make attempts to come by them. The notion of the 'other' is rooted in difference which, in its turn, is the outcome of ignorance. It is not ordinary ignorance by which we only mean the lack of knowledge regarding matters of fact. The ignorance that is at the root of the sense of difference is foundational. It relates to our lack of right notions about the nature of ultimate Reality. This has come down from a beginningless past and is congenital to us. If we succeed in dispelling this primeval ignorance, at one stroke all our multifarious desires will disappear. With the disappearance of desires, our attachment to objects and the consequent feverish efforts to acquire them will automatically come to an end. Yājñavalkya stresses the importance of our rising to the state of 'desirelessness'. He shows that all our sundry desires have to be replaced by the one supreme desire for the Self.[9]

The mind is the seat of desires and unless it is purified we cannot get rid of our liking for this thing and that thing. The impurities of the mind have accumulated from a dateless past and it is no easy matter to eradicate them. Many courses of positive discip such as the meticulous performance of N Karma, the practice of mind-concentrat devotion to God and the pursuit of Veda knowledge, are enjoined by Śruti and Sm These courses of spiritual training are forth at length in the Bhagavad Gītā as as in Patanjali Yoga. The successful prac of these 'yogas' takes a very long time. education is a slow process and spiri education is specially so. It is no use for the pace of spiritual development. It ge rally takes many years to unlearn our habits and some of them are so strongly r ed that they disappear only with the bo After unlearning our evil tendencies we m cultivate the right kind of habit. In m cases, even a whole life-time is not eno to take one step in the proper direction.

Nor is there any guarantee that once have taken the right step, we will not fa or slip again into our old ways. The fo of habit is very powerful and even reso people succumb to it when they are not su ciently on their guard. We can never be s that the Old Adam is completely dead a will not raise its ugly head again. Dean I has said that the Devil has the knack of p tending to be dead and lying in wait to t us unawares and reassert its supremacy. E disciplined sages have their weak mom when they yield to their lower impulses. soon they realise their folly, sincerely re for their sins and try to forge ahead. T spiritual progress is not always an unimpe march forward. There are ups and down it. It can be represented only by means curves and not by a vertical straight line.

In spite, however, of all lapses and ba slidings we have full faith in the capacity man to attain moral and spiritual perfec We feel that this is his birth-right and noth could stand between him and his final dest Obstacles can be surmounted provided th is the resolute will and a sufficient number opportunities. Thus we are compelled by faith in the perfectibility of man to repeated chances for him. This is the rationale of the Hindu belief in transmigration. 'Becoming perfect through many births, man reaches the supreme state.'[10] If it is granted that perfection is not something external to man but something already existing in him and that he has only to awaken to it by a process of elimination of all the thick accretions that have accumulated through the ages, then we are bound to grant also that if not now, some time later, if not in the present life-time, in some future life-time, if not in the near future, at least in the remote future, man is sure to arrive at his birth-right. It would be most cruel to hold before man the vision of perfection but deny opportunities for its realization.

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[7] Katha VI. 17. Hiriyanna's translation.

[8] Gita XV. 3.

[9] IV. iv. 6. योऽकामो निष्काम आप्तकाम आत्मकाम :

Certain facts of every-day experience, if their implications are logically worked out, also point to the same conclusion. It is a well-known fact that all men are not equally gifted in learning things or doing them. Some people, for example, take to music and mathematics very readily and, without much previous training attain great skill in a very short time. They take to these studies as naturally as fishes take to water. The effortless manner in which they master the subtleties of these subjects suggests that they are picking up old threads and not learning them for the first time. This phenomenon is what we call precocity and the only way of explaining it is by supposing that these people were already at these studies in a previous life but left them incomplete for want of sufficient time. They are so imbued with them that they are drawn to them in their next birth as if by force. 'Then in his succeeding birth he regains the understanding acquired in his previous body and strives still further for perfection. By his former habit he is led on in spite of himself.'[11] By way of contrast, there are also people who are so dense that they cannot manage even very ordinary jobs in spite of much training. 'It is frequently observed,' writes Sankara, 'that some are clever in certain kinds of work, such as painting, from their very birth, even without practice in this life while others are unskilful even in some very easy tasks.'[12] Seeing beautiful pictures or hearing melodious music stirs some people to their depths and calls up experiences which have an almost other-worldly look. They are so strange and unexpected that they must be deemed to be reminiscences of a past life, brought to the surface by a powerful stimulus. Kālidāsa has given poetical expression to this idea in one of his plays.[13]

There is also the fact of inequality in the happiness that men enjoy in their earthly existence. Some are in the enjoyment of the highest happiness while others are grovelling in abject misery. This fact becomes all the more poignant when, as is often the case, the happiness and the misery bear no relation to the merits of the people. We often come across men of great attainments suffering from want, while wicked and unscrupulous people roll in plenty and flourish like 'the green, bay tree'. The moral sense in us is shocked by these disparities, for we have a rooted belief that virtue must be rewarded and vice punished. The doctrine of repeated births and transmigration explains this seeming anomaly. We must look for the cause of the happiness or misery that fall to the lot of people not within the narrow limits of the present life-time but in a wider sphere. There can be no effect without a sufficient cause and if the latter is not visible, we must suppose that it is invisible. From the good or evil effects which have become manifest in the present life-time we have to infer corresponding causes which work from behind the screen.[14]

Similarly for the rewards and the punishments of what men do in this life-time we must look to the future. All discrepancies will disappear if we but 'look before and after'. The moral law cannot be cheated. Such a view will not only preserve the moral order of the universe but also fill human beings with resignation and hope at the same time. With regard to the past, what is done cannot be undone and, since there is no escape from its consequences, our attitude must be one of willing resignation. So far as the present and the future are concerned, they are entirely in our hands and there is plenty of room for hope. Belief in reincarnation, therefore, is fully justified by its results. No further proof of the doctrine is necessary. That which we are compelled to assume to explain, the facts of experience as good as prove. This line of proof is what Kant calls Transcendental Proof.

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[10] Gita VI. 45.

अनेक जन्म संसिद्धस्ततो याति परां गतिम् ।

[11] Gita VI. 43-45.

[12] Commentary on Br. Up. IV. iv. 2. Swami Madhavananda's Translation.

[13] *Abhijnana Sakuntalam* : Act V. Sloka 2.

[14] Compare Kalidasa's *Raghuvamsa* I Canto.

फलानुमेयाः प्रारंभाः संस्काराः प्राक्तना इव ।

It is thus clear that we lie on the beds that we have made for ourselves. As we sow so we reap. What we are in the present life-time is determined by the knowledge, deeds and experience of a previous life-time. This past record is ordinarily referred to as merit and demerit, *puṇya* and *pāpa*. The Upaniṣad declares that 'When a man departs what accompanies him are his knowledge, his deeds and his experience.'[15] These abide as impressions or tendencies in the subtle body which is the connecting link between one bodily existence and another. What transmigrates is the subtle body though we wrongly attribute it to the self. The wrong notion arises from the constant association between the self and the subtle body. Just as we believe that the self passes from the waking state to the state of dream and thence to the state of profound sleep, even so we speak of the self as migrating from one body to another. Just as the self is supposed to move up and down between the three states any number of times even so we attribute repeated births and deaths to the self. In reality the self does not move from one state to another or from one body to another. In both cases the movements belong to the adjuncts, either the intellect or the subtle body and not to the self. Hence the Upaniṣad says: 'It thinks as it were, it moves as it were'.[16] All the phenomenal attributes asc ed to the self are therefore in the nature c superimposition arising from ignorance of real nature. Just as a white crystal is taken to be red in colour owing to its pr mity to a red china-rose, even so the sel said to move or migrate owing to its proxi to the intellect and the subtle body. Just close scrutiny shows that the crystal is w and not red even so discriminating knowle reveals the self in its real nature as unmov unchanging, ever the same, absolutely per and of the essence of sentience. All the tra of the transmigratory process is intended bring man to this realization.

The tendencies which lie dormant in subtle body begin to manifest themse when the external environment is favour for them. They assume the form of a mod cation of the mind, known as *vṛtti*, as result of the last thought which is upperm in the mind of the dying man. This *vṛtt* 'the particular consciousness' to which Yāj valkya refers. 'Then (at the time of dea the self has particular consciousness and g to the body which is related to that consci ness.'[17] Just as when a king is touring country, palaces or mansions are kept re for his use wherever he goes, even so n bodies in suitable environments are wai to be tenanted by the self which has depar from the old body, accompanied by its rec of past knowledge, deeds and experien The new habitation will be exactly suited the unfoldment of the impressions and t dencies that it is carrying with it. 'Some them (selves) enter the womb and bec embodied; others become immovable obj — according to their deeds and according their thoughts.'[18] 'Those who have been good conduct here would quickly attain g birth, that of a brahmana, of a kṣatriya of a vaiśya. And those who have been of conduct here obtain evil birth, that of a dog, of a hog or of a cāṇḍāla.'[19] 'The man who has fallen away from yoga is reborn in the house of the pure and the prosperous. Or, he is born in the family of Yogins rich in wisdom.'[20] Birth in a particular environment is not therefore an accident. It is strictly in accordance with the Karma of the individual which has become operative. The last thoughts that a man entertains count for much. The desires and longings that rule the mind at the time of death determine the place and other circumstances of his birth. The right kind of desire and longing will not come unless we are always in the habit of entertaining in our minds true desires and true longings. 'Whatever object a man thinks of at the last moment, when he leaves his body — the same does he reach, O Arjuna, being ever absorbed in the thought thereof. And whoso at the time of death, leaves his body thinking of me alone and passes away — he becomes one with me; of this there is no doubt. Therefore *at all times* think of me.'[21]

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[15] Br. Up. IV. iv. 2.
तं विद्याकर्मणी समन्वारभेते पूर्वं प्रज्ञा च ।

[16] Br. Up. IV. iii. 7. ध्यायतीव लेलायतीव ।

[17] Br. Up. IV. iv. 2.
सविज्ञानो भवति सविज्ञानमेव अन्ववक्रामति ।

[18] Katha V. 7. Hiriyanna's Translation.

The Self leaves the old body when it is no longer fit for habitation, having become thin and emaciated through old age and disease. It casts off the old body exactly in the way in which we cast off old and worn-out clothes. 'As a person casts off worn-out garments and puts on others that are new, so does the inner man cast off worn-out bodies and enter into others that are new.'[22] At the time of departure the self gathers up the functions of all the organs into itself and comes to reside in the heart. Hence the dying man does not see, smell, taste, speak or hear. The intellect too is withdrawn into the self and he therefore does not know or recognise people. 'When his (the departing man's) speech becomes merged in mind, the mind in the life-breath, the life-breath in fire and fire in the Supreme Deity, then he does not know them (the people around him).'[23] It means that the presiding deities (*adhisṭhātri devatās*) get back to their sources, that of the voice to Fire, that of the mind to the Moon, that of the eye to the Sun, that of the ear to the Quarters and so forth. 'Then the top of the heart brightens and through that brightened top the self departs either through the eye or through the head or any other part of the body.'[24] Through what particular opening the self will make its exit will depend on the karma that has become ripe for fruition. 'When the self departs the vital force follows it and all the rest of the organs follow it.' That the other organs such as the eye, ear and so on cannot function independently of the vital force is made out in many contexts in the Upaniṣads.[25]

How exactly does the departure take place? Does the self completely let go its hold on the dying body and go to another like a bird flying from one tree to another? Or, is it carried by angel-guides from one body to another? Or, does it remain where it is while only its organs become all-pervading and begin to function in another body? These views have been advanced by various schools of philosophy, but Yājñavalkya does not approve of them. He sets forth a view that is applicable to both transmigration and the movement of the self from one state to another. The three states, waking, dream and dreamless sleep are explained as arising from the expansion or contraction of the intellect and the sense-organs. In the waking condition the intellect and the organs are fully expanded while in the state of dreamless sleep they are all completely contracted and consequently quiescent. The dream-state is intermediate between the two. The intellect and the organs are neither fully expanded nor wholly contracted. It is clear that they are capable of expansion and contraction. Even the expansion in the waking state is limited by the nature of the body. When the body is cast off they become fully expanded. In fact they become all-pervasive just like the light of a lamp when the enclosing jar is broken or like the space contained in a pot becoming one with universal space when the pot is broken. That the intellect and the organs are all-pervasive is stated elsewhere in the Upaniṣad. 'These (the organs of speech, mind and vital force) are all equal in extensity and are all-pervasive.'[26] So long as these remain in a particular body they are confined to its limits and hence they are contracted. When they leave the body they regain their natural form and become all-pervasive. They build a new body for themselves in accordance with past Karma and, entering it, they contract again and function within its limits. The presiding deities come back to them and aid in their functioning. In making a new body for themselves the organs do not go in for fresh materials but only refashion the old ones which come ready to hand in the shape of subtle essences (*bhūta sukṣmāṇi*). There again the parallel between the movement from one state to another and the movement from one body to another is worth noting. It is said that when the self passes from the waking to the dream state 'it takes away a little of the impressions of this all-embracing world... and creates a dream-body for itself.'[27] For making a new body the rudiments are supplied by the contents of the subtle body. This is el dated by means of an example : 'just goldsmith takes a little quantity of gold fashions another — a newer and a better f — so does the self throw away this b makes it senseless and makes another, a ne and a better one, suited to the manes, celestial minstrels, the gods, viraj or any o being.'[28]

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[19] Ch. Up. V. 10. 7. Ganganath Jha's Translation.

[20] Gita VI. 41-42.

[21] *Ibid.*, VIII. 5-7.

[22] *Ibid.*, II. 22.

[23] Ch. Up. VI. xv. 2.

[24] Br. Up. IV. iv. 2.

[25] Prasna II. 4; Ch. V. i. 12; Br. VI i. 13; Kausitaki II. 14.

The stages through which the past kn ledge, deeds and experience of the individ in the shape of tendencies (*apūrva*) have pass before they are embodied again are forth in some detail in another Upani *Apūrva* or Faith is poured into fire an emerges as King Soma. This, in its turn poured into the Deity of Rain and it co down as rains. These rains fall on earth food-grains crop up. These are eaten men and get transformed into vital en and thence to woman where it develops i the embryo. After sufficient growth maturation the embryo is born as a hu being.'[29] If evil tendencies predominate the individual he may be reborn as a b or even as a plant. Similarly, if good ten cies prevail in large measure he may reborn as a celestial being or even as a g Thus there is much moving space both ab and below.

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[26] Br. Up. I. v. 13.

[27] Br. Up. IV. iii. 9.

[28] *Ibid.*, IV. iv. 4.

[29] Ch. Up. V. iv to x and Br. Up. VI. ii. 9-1

PERSONALITIES IN THE LIFE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(*Continued from Page* 62)

Ramachandra Dutta : (1851-1899) Ramachandra Dutta was a householder devotee of the Master. He observed Narendra restlessly wandering hither and thither seeking religion. It is stated that Ramachandra Dutta advised Naren to go to Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar if he wanted to know about religion and realize God. Ramachandra was one of the two among the well-known disciples who first met the Master.

Sri Ramakrishna (1836-1886) : It was the contact with this Great Master that m of Naren's doubts were solved, the impor being 'about the existence of God.' T relation between the two and the impact wh the coming in contact of these two personal had on Indian society as well as the worl general is well-known. The touch of Master transformed Naren into the Sw Vivekananda.

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(Latu Maharaj)

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

Chapter IX (*continued*)

Whoever would accept service as his approach to God will have, at the very outset, to efface his personality fully. No one can really serve or nurse another if he retains his selfishness, for through that will enter considerations which would thwart the high ideal to be realized. We take the path of service to be an easy one, but if there is no love behind it — love that kills selfishness — the path turns out to be weary and desolate; service becomes a burden, it appears monotonous and painful, it creates no end of worries. The servant is torn between hope and hopelessness, because his self counts on profit and loss. When profit is not sighted service becomes mechanical, wooden. That kind of service cannot improve man anyway. But where heart is wedded to service it becomes heavenly; the servant, not being tied to anything, not thinking of any gain or of any danger, is easily lifted up and finds himself covered by God. It is for this the Master engaged Latu in loving service to him. He taught him: 'Look here, my boy, don't be swayed by any hope of return or motive; give yourself completely up to Him. You will get everything if you do not let go your hold of Him. If you do, cravings will remain or even increase, but only to tantalize and make you unhappy.'

Below we give an idea of what Sri Ramakrishna meant by service, as Latu Maharaj understood it. And Latu's was the most faithful picture of the Master's sayings and doings, for he never allowed his own intellect to intervene. Whatever the Master said or did he himself explained to him. Sometimes he asked the disciple questions at which the latter would say, 'What do I know? You yourself explain it to me.' And the explanation was not only treasured in the mind but was acted up to and lived thoroughly. When he narrated anything it was all quotations of the Master's words.

'Do you know what he used to say? To feed man is in a way serving the Lord. He is in all creatures. It is He who reveals Himself as hunger. Whatever you offer to that fire is offered to Him — is it not?'

To this a devotee queried 'Yes, in a way it is. But do we feel it? When we feel hungry we eat; when we feel sleepy we sleep. We think ours is this hunger, ours the sleep. Do you then say that this sense of mine is God?'

Latu Maharaj: 'Yes! You say you feel hungry, feel sleepy. Well who is this "you"? What is this? Is it hand or feet, body or mind? Whence has come this peculiar sense in you?'

Devotee: 'I do not know that. What I am I do not know. But this I feel too truly that the hunger or sleep is mine, that I want this thing or that; that it will please or displease me.'

Another day:

Latu Maharaj: 'Look here. To give anything to a man is to serve the Lord. If a man gives away something and does not want anything in return — name or fame, power or pelf, heaven or any kind of return from the man, God is pleased with him. Know it for certain, whatever you give here is virtually a service to Him. But if you do it in a clever way — with some motive behind — it will not reach Him.'

Devotee: 'What is this "gift in a clever way," Maharaj?'

Latu Maharaj: 'When do we call a man clever? When his work satisfies or fulfils some motive — isn't it? But such motivated action cannot cheat God — He simply refuses to accept it. It is they themselves who are thus befooled.'

Devotee: 'Why say "they are befooled"? On the contrary they get their desired things done, as we generally see. They are undoubtedly clever fellows, not fools.'

Latu Maharaj: 'Look here, what would you call one who wins at first but loses at last? Would you call him a clever fellow or a fool? Clever is he who wins the game. Isn't it?'

Yet another day:

Latu Maharaj: 'Hear what he used to say. Whatever you do ultimately reaches Him. You feel if you do a thing surreptitiously the Lord will not know it. Fools, what cleverness will you show Him — One who is running this big show of the universe? Whatever you do — good, bad or indifferent — will reach Him without a doubt. The whole thing — have I not said? — is His show, His sport. He said, "Before we start a work, call on Him, remember Him; in the midst of work whenever you get a little leisure, call on Him again; and when the work is done call on Him once again, whoever can do this need have no worries."'

Latu was a *sattvic* boy, naturally inclined towards God. But after all a boy, unripe yet. Lest he should busy himself at that age with humanitarian activities and forget God or the relation of work with God, the Master took special care to protect him against this danger. He did not teach him, in the language of the scripture, the three kinds of service — service with the body, by word, or with mind. But he led him, through hints and words, to the most important of them by implanting in him the proper mental attitude towards all action. He used to take Latu on different occasions and situations, to various places, to the residences of devotees and noted people; would show him people of various types, analyse their works and attitudes, and warn Latu against possible pitfalls.

Chapter X

We will narrate in this chapter a few portant incidents of Lātu Maharaj's depicting his practice of the servantship of Lord. Just a few, for they are numerous; all are equally important, each unfolding beauty of an aspect of this really wond life. We will describe below only those wh in a special way, deepened his servant ideal and helped him to understand the na of the Master.

Lātu Maharaj often used to say, 'To s anyone my dear, is a really difficult job. who has failed to serve his parents — ca serve his guru? If it is ever possible for to look upon his guru as one's parent, t only, not before that, will one be able serve the guru to some extent. "Some exte is the expression. How often has the ser to bear with harsh words, abuses and threa He (the Master) never spared us. Had taken those occasions to heart, could we h served him?' Numerous were the occas when such expressions would escape his l

One day Lātu filled a bucket with w for the Master to bathe, but placed it o spot which was not very clean. The Ma noticed it and said, 'You fool, is it not w for bathing? Why does a man take b To become pure in body. Isn't it? If you p that water for bathing in a filthy place w serve the purpose? Can impurity make pure? Yes, I know water is Narayana, Lord in His purifying aspect. Notwithstan that can you offer dirty water to the Lo There are waters and waters. One you use for worship, another for washing clo and dishes, a third for washing your f There are different kinds of water for d rent purposes. There are waters which can neither use for drinking nor for wors This conversation was recorded by a ho holder-devotee who was present when L Maharaj narrated it.

Another incident: For some years Ramakrishna could not touch any me When he was in that state it happened so times that Lātu carried the metallic water vessel when the Master wanted to wash. One night the Master went out without saying anything to anyone. There was none present — neither Lātu nor Harish. Referring to this incident Lātu Maharaj said later, 'Do you know what happened that day? I had been counting beads but could not concentrate my mind, and had to get up. I returned to the Master's room. When I did not find him there anxiety seized me. I cried aloud "Where are you?" It struck me that he might have gone out for a wash. I took the water vessel and went towards the woods in the north. Do you know what he said to me on return? "If you were to serve anybody you are to be very careful about his wants and requirements. Then only you will benefit thereby." Can you imagine what he said to Harish that night? "You are meditating, my boy. But the person on whom you are meditating, cannot get a jug of water even! What benefit will you derive from such meditation?"'

A third incident: The real nature of service was revealed to Lātu through this incident. The Master amply brought it home to him that service did not merely mean physical nursing. He said, 'Look here, my boy; if someone offers the Lord anything good that he got by begging that also is a piece of service.' And he narrated a story from *Bhaktamālā* to substantiate it. We omit the story.

One day Lātu heard the Master expressing his desire to have a picture of Sri Gauranga, the Great Lord. The very next day Lātu came to Calcutta, got a picture as desired from Rāmabābu and hung it on a wall of the Master's room. When the Master's eyes fell on it he was overjoyed. He said, 'Did you, my boy, ask it from Rām? How did he feel it when you asked? Did you ask it in my name?' Lātu said in reply, 'No, I did not take your name.' 'Then?' 'I said, "Will you kindly give me a picture of Lord Gauranga?"' 'Did you say like that? How did Rām react?' 'He said, "Go and ask your mother (Rāmabābu's wife)."' Master was full of joy and praised Lātu; but he warned him not to ask anything of anybody in his name.

A fourth incident: Lātu was sent to Sarat Maharaj's house. Sarat's mother would not let Lātu go without taking his lunch. Lātu returned to Dakshineswar quite late, in the afternoon. The Master asked him if he took his noonday meal or was fasting. Lātu said, 'Sarat's mother gave me quite a heavy meal. Hence this delay. She is a first class cook. She prepared such a nice *chachchadi*[1], I had never before tasted such a dish.'

Master: 'Is it so? And you took such a dish all alone? Did not bring any for me?'

Lātu flushed in shame and hung his head down. Seeing him in that condition the Master added, 'Do one thing. Tomorrow go to Sarat's house a little earlier, get *chachchadi* prepared by his mother, and bring it for me.'

Are we to suppose that the Master who had thoroughly conquered all desires felt tempted to take *chachchadi*? It appears to us that he wanted to teach Lātu the true spirit of service. 'Do unto others as you want to be done by.' One is to serve the Lord with, what one feels, best things. In order to make Lātu understand this, he was made to walk six miles, come to Sarat's mother, bring *chachchadi* from her and offer it to the Master. The Master, who naturally extols others' qualities, tasted the dish and said, 'You are perfectly right, my boy; I too had never tasted such *chachchadi*. Sarat's mother must be a pure heart; or else she could not have prepared such nice dishes.'

Fifth incident: This day Lātu presented a bouquet of fresh flowers to the Master. He got it from a Brāhmo devotee. The Master admiringly looked at it and said, 'Anything that turns man's mind towards the Lord is a fit present for a *sādhu* (holy man).' Saying this much he went into ecstasy.

Sixth incident: In those days Holy Mother (Sri Sarada Devi, Sri Ramakrishna's consort) used to stay in the Nahabat (concert room) to the north-east of the Kali temple. Her modesty was so exceptional that although she had been living there for so many months, in a room so close to the Master's, none of the devotees could ever see her, many did not know of her existence at all. Golap Mā and other women disciples of the Master had not as yet come to Dakshineswar. Holy Mother was passing her lonely days, all to herself. One day the Master saw Lātu meditating, on the bank of the Ganges, motionless as a log. He called him aloud and said, 'Fool, little do you know that the very object of your meditation is inside the Nahabat; and she is not getting an assistant to knead the dough for *chapati*.' Lātu flushed and looked small. One thing here is rather odd. The Master had never before asked Lātu to serve Mother. When today he was asked quite unexpectedly to serve her he regarded himself blessed and with quick steps appeared at the door of the Nahabat along with the Master. The Master addressed the Holy Mother and said, 'This boy is pure in heart; he will knead the dough, roll *chapatis* and do other chares for you.' The incident throws light on two things — how the Master was taking Lātu up through the path of service and how the boy Lātu had already purified himself sufficiently by 1881 so as to be able to serve the Holy Mother. There is a third hint in it. The Master showed Lātu that one who would tread the path of service should not only serve the Master wholeheartedly but devote himself to the services of the dear ones of the Master too.

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[1] A Bengali curry preparation.

Later on when he was living in Vārāṇasi he referred to this incident and said, 'Ah! We cannot conceive of the difficulties Mother had to pass through during those days. In that too small a room she passed months and years; nobody knew this. When she used to take her bath in the Ganges no one knew. I have never seen one so seized with the passion for dispassion. How blessed am I that the Master took me to her who made my life fruitful! To serve her? What could I do? On the contrary it was she who bound me down with love celestial. She had nothing to expect of us; it was through her grace that we obtained her for a mother.'

All the above incidents took place in 18 the following were in 1882.

One night when Lātu was fanning the M ter he was dozing — the poor boy had wo hard throughout the day. His great love Sri Ramakrishna would not allow him to s himself. The Master smiled and said, 'L can you tell me, my boy, if the Lord sleeps?'

Lātu was taken aback. Surprise writ l on his face, he said, 'I don't know.'

The Master replied gravely, 'My boy, go to sleep; in the whole world of crea all are subject to sleep. Only the Lord ca sleep. If he does there will be dark throughout the world; it will be destro Day and night He is wide awake and is s ing His creatures. Because He serves unceasingly it is that the creatures can s so confidently.' At this Lātu said, 'What Lord serves His creatures without a break the creatures sleep, having accepted His vice?' The Master: 'Exactly, He lulls c tures to sleep and Himself keeps awake w ing over them.'

What took place later Lātu Maharaj did tell us. Something too grave must have t place. For, just telling us this much he came unusually grave and stopped talking scene, too intimate, too sacred must flashed before his mind's eye, which made figure sweet and sad. The devotee waited long hours, expecting the silence to break last, baffled but not disappointed, he left Maharaj to enjoy his sweet reminiscences

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Lātu accompanied the Master wherever went; he used to carry his things of ho needs. Once he forgot to take these th and accompanied the Master to the hous a devotee. Reaching there Lātu rememb what he had done and brought it to the n of the Master. The Master, however, did spare him. He took him to task and s 'Hallo Lātu, are you so forgetful as th Things of hourly needs—even such things have forgotten to bring! Look at me. E now and then I am carried away by divine fervour, so much so that I cannot properly take care of the cloth I am wearing. Even then I never forget to bring those things. If you forget like that how can we... ?' The Master did not complete the sentence. Lātu's eyes were brimming with tears, the boy was trembling. Rāmabābu was sitting in front. Lātu helpless, looked at him and said, 'I will never forget like that. Please ask him....' The boy could not complete the sentence, emotion choked his voice, he broke down.

Most of the devotees present never saw the Master in such a grave mood. They could not take it lightly. A couple of minutes passed by. Rāmabābu and Manomohanbābu recovered themselves and earnestly interceded in favour of Lātu. The Master cooled down and forgave Lātu for the time.

* * *

Lātu has accompanied Sri Ramakrishna to the house of Jñāna Chowdhury. Many devotees, including Pandit Gauri[2] of Indesh, are present. This is Lātu's first acquaintance with the Pandit. Lātu got a very valuable instruction from him which he narrated as follows: 'Do you know what the Pandit told me? "There is a good deal of difference between knowledge acquired by study of books and one got by actual experience. One cannot get rid of one's ignorance by study. As long as the Lord's light does not descend on a man he cannot have true knowledge. When that light comes all darkness disappears; what the Reality is in Itself is revealed."'

(*To be continued*)

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[2] Pandit Gauri was the first among the Pandits who accepted Sri Ramakrishna as an Incarnation of God. And the Master showed his grace to him by taking away his occult powers which made him invincible in all discussions, but were proving an impediment to his spiritual progress.

GAUTAMA BUDDHA

BHUPENDRA NATH SARKAR

The great Buddha in the words of Dr S. Radhakrishnan, typifies for all time the soul of the East with its intense repose, dreamy gentleness, tender calm and deep love. Buddha has nothing but warm admiration for the prophet of the soul, the true Brahmin, who was required to say, 'Silver and gold have I none.' It was his privilege to start a religion independent of dogma and priesthood, sacrifice and sacrament, which would insist on an inward change of heart and a system of self-culture. That Buddhism is alien to Hinduism has been repudiated by the great master himself, who admits that the dharma which he has discovered by an effort of self-culture is the ancient way, the Aryan path, the eternal dharma. Buddhism, one may say, is a return of Brahmanism to its own fundamental principles.

Early monastic Buddhism is akin to our yoga practices. We are supported in our contention by Dr. Nalinaksa Datta and Sri Tarak Chandra Ray. The artificial aids taken by an adept are mainly: (i) *ganana*, i.e. counting, which is not to exceed ten; (ii) *anubandhana*, i.e., following the course in its three stages viz., beginning, middle and end; and (iii) *khusana*, i.e., watching the points of contact; navel, heart and nose-tip. By these aids the adept soon acquires the *patibhaga-nimitta* (concept) and develops *appana* (fixation of the mind) and in some cases the body of the adept becomes so light as to rise up in the air (*kumbhaka* of the yogis). At this stage the external inhalation and exhalation cease, but there is internal inhalation (*prāṇāyāma*), to which then the adept's mind is directed. He should sit cross-legged, keeping his body erect (*padmāsana*). The mind follows the course of the breath consciously. Such observation and control of the breath lead to stoppage of all bodily movements (*samādhi*).

Edwin Arnold puts in a nut-shell the message of Buddha in his Light of Asia : 'Within yourselves deliverance must be sought.' Again, 'For glory to be Lord of self.' Rys Davids sings in the same strain : 'But he who conquers himself alone is the greatest victor.'

Tagore, the poet-philosopher, had a soft heart for Gautama Buddha, by whom he was greatly influenced. This was so, because the message of the Upaniṣads (the Magna Carta of human rights as put by Swami Madhavananda) is identical with that of Buddha. In his inimitable way Tagore says, 'Lord Buddha revealed himself, getting up from his seat. In the hallow of his revelation India was revealed in her true colour. His message, breaking up geographical barriers, spread far and wide. India became a place of pilgrimage, for Buddha's message recognized every human being. The tidal waves of Truth broke down colour bar ; India extended her invitatio nations, all and sundry.' *

English poet, Duff Ainslie aptly says ab the Lord :

'But love I bear thee, love and stay,
Humanity, for thy sole sake,
With mine own hands the bridge to mak
Which if thou cross, thou, too, shalls't g
Freedom from birth and death and pai
And thus eternal bliss attain.'

We wind up with the picture Tagore painted of Buddha : 'The Buddha who centuries sits enthroned in the hearts of awakened people, ornamented with the of ings of love and devotion from countless m and women is the Buddha of all times. portrait is being painted on the rolled ca stretching from age to age.'

Will humanity hearken to his message love ?

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* Passage rendered into English by the pr writer.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

The first page Sanskrit translation serial started from the May issue is by the Editor.

Swami Vimalananda's article on 'Prasthana Traya and Its Background,' is the fourth instalment of the series.

Swami Siddhinathananda of the Ramakrishna Order, deals briefly with 'Our National Ideals,' and shows how Swami Vivekananda helped India recover and reinstate them with added vigour and meaning.

Dr Abinash Chandra Bose from New Delhi in his article 'A Wandering Monk who preached Human Unity,' depicts the life and philosophy of Swami Vivekananda succinctly.

Dr P. Nagaraja Rao's article 'Śankarāch —the Great Philosopher' is a summary of lecture delivered by him at Sri Ramakris Math, Madras, on 5th May, 1963 on occasion of the public celebration of birthday of the great Acharya.

Prof. M. K. Venkatrama Iyer, a ret Professor of Annamalai University is a reg contributor to the *Vedanta Kesari.*

Sri Bhupendra Nath Sarkar is an edu tionist and writer from Krishnagar, W Bengal.

DISTORTION AND MISREADING OF FACTS

It is an undeniable fact that one cannot jump out of oneself. Everyone in this world is limited by several factors both inside and outside of himself; besides one has one's leanings, one's aptitudes, one's prejudices and one's jealousies too. Very rare are the persons who can go beyond all these and who would like to see everything in its true perspective, keep an open mind, untarnished by prejudices and uncoloured by bias. Anyway we cannot expect to find such persons among mere scholars, who tenaciously hold on to their pet theories, to whom philosophy means merely postulation or discussion of some thesis and at best an intellectual acumen to weave a web of words, grandiose in appearance.

To many again spirituality lies in doing good to some particular sections of society; in other words they measure spirituality by the utilitarian value. Indian philosophy does not say that it is bad or it is wrong. It on the other hand encourages such an attitude. Why? Because it believes in the diverse absorbing capacities of individuals. If going to heaven for enjoyment is sought by some, how can anyone stop them? They will not listen to any other type of advice. But a time will come, thinks the Hindu philosopher, when the individual will give up all this and move up higher in the ladder. But the difficulty with these former people is that they won't concede that there can be other views of the landscape; they want to assert that theirs is the only view and all others are non-views. And they work themselves up against those who differ from them, so feverishly that they lose patience. Their impatience is such that they blind themselves to the truths that burn before them and try to distort facts, but fortunately so grotesque are their presentations that a little thinking will reveal their absurdity.

Typical examples of such an attitude could be found when we scan some periodicals of the time. To some of these scholars self-denial or self-sacrifice practised in India for the sake of Mokṣa appears to be hedonism of the worst sort. A novel interpretation and argumentation indeed! We are bewildered when such statements come out from the pens of seasoned scholars and intellectual luminaries. Can it be really that they do not understand what Mokṣa means; that it is a state where, at least in the case of the Advaitin, there is no individuality in the liberated? We refuse to believe it. It is certainly not naivety. We leave it to the readers to assess as to what it is. It is plain and simple and needs no logician to tell us that for enjoying anything one requires a personality, an individuality, a body gross or subtle, whereas liberation means, in Advaitin's view, the merging of this individuality, getting rid of these bodies gross or subtle into the Impersonal. We fail to understand how this meaning hedonism has been read into Mokṣa. For, if our reading of the meaning of hedonism is correct, it is trying to make the most of everything here and now; to enjoy the present and not denying all the so-called good things of the world here and await for something uncertain — in the eyes of the hedonist — elsewhere. Neither do we think we are far mistaken in our supposition. For, the dictionary meaning of the term hedonism is: the doctrine that pleasure is the chief good.* The *Webster's International Dictionary* clearly puts it thus: hedonic sect, a sect that placed the highest good in the gratification of the senses.

One can see what a wide gulf of difference there is between one view and the other. The difference is like between day and night. Would you call a Buddha or a Christ a hedonist? None will dare to. For, the immense good that they have done to humanity by their spiritual gift, is immeasurable and unforgettable. Their lives are the only hope in this dreary and dismal world.

Again, Sri Ramakrishna did not steep himself in works of charity, which according to some are the only criterion of spirituality. Yet what a great contribution he has made in the realm of spirituality! People now have just begun to discern a little of it. When the full impact of it will be felt and known, people will be amazed. The works of these personalities are not like the earthly charities, of a temporal and ephemeral nature. They are soul-soothing, and of perennial value. Their appearance in the world marks the beginning of a new epoch, a new era. Let us leave alone these who are the crown glories of spiritual life; even persons who have realized God breathe solace, and an atmosphere of peace is created round them. What comparison is there then between a sincere seeker of Mokṣa and the hedonist? The latter brings in only strife and stress, competition and destruction.

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* The Concise Oxford Dictionary.

Again, it is not true that a uniform sympathy can flow towards all from the hearts of moralists even of the extreme type. T
sympathy will be limited by interests; ma
to the extent of a sect, a community, a c
or a nation and whenever a conflict of int
arises all sympathy vanishes. Their w
structure of sympathy built on quicksand
mere moralism disappears in no time.
so the sympathy of the liberated, of the G
realized souls. Their sympathy is with
sinner as well as the saint; with the ric
well as the poor; with the white as well as
black and yellow. There is no limit for
sympathy. For it is based on firm grou
not on intellectual appreciation, but by im
diate perception. Against this background
reader will be able to judge what a bla
distortion of facts has been attempted at
certain quarters, to characterize seeking
Mokṣa as hedonism.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

THE CONCEPT OF MUKTI IN ADVAITA VEDANTA: By A. G. Krishna Warrier, Madras University Philosophical Series No. 9. Pp. ix+564. Price Rs. 10.

This work is the doctoral thesis of the writer who worked as a research scholar in the Madras University from 1952-55 and is characterized by a painstaking thoroughness which has made the book more or less a treatise on Advaita Vedanta itself despite the limited title. The book is divided into two parts the first giving an exposition of the concept of *mukti* according to the various non-Vedantic schools while the second is an elaborate exposition of the fundamentals of Advaita leading up to the subject of *mukti*. The necessity of the first part is obvious for it is only by emphasizing the defects in the concept as expounded by these schools that the way is paved for the central topic. *Mukti* implies bondage. Hence the author has to describe how bondage is held to take place by the several schools including the Advaita. Then the means to liberation; and finally what this liberation itself is.

Dr Warrier gives a fairly elaborate account of the non-Vedantic systems and the succeeding ones are progressive improvements on the previous regarding the nature of release. At the en
the Chapter he gives his own criticisms t
bring to light the inherent defects of
systems themselves. The Bauddha and the
systems also come under examination and
defects are pointed out. A good critical
analytic account of the four main schoo
Buddhism as given here is of great use be
it enables the student to understand how
anatmavadin is capable of speaking of nir
The author then proceeds to the Purva Mi
system and it is a great relief to see th
does not repeat the cliches of some scholars
the system is a *nastika* one or that it str
with an inherent contradiction, that it is
after-thought on the part of Kumarila who
ed a philosophy on rituals and so on. Dr W
recognises that the views on the Self by K
rila Bhatta were distorted by his followers
were not pleased with his Vedantic leanin
this regard and that it was this that was
ponsible for the adverse criticism of the
Vedantins against the Mimamsa conception o
Self. The central tenet that *jnana* and k
prevent the re-embodiment of the self and
to *moksa* is rightly emphasized. The tenet
bliss does not characterize the state of libe
is also one that is common to several

Vedantic schools of thought including the Purva Mimamsa.

The second part of the book may in itself be described as a text book on Advaita Vedanta as it deals with almost all the important concepts of the system and runs to more than 300 pages. The learned author deals with all the relevant topics like *sat, chit, ananda, avidya, maya, jiva*, the status of the world, *mukti* and its real nature. Added to these there is also a comparative account of the Dvaita and the Visistadvaita systems. His view regarding the status of the world requires some careful consideration. His contention is that the world' is not an illusion as the rope-snake but that the mithyatva really implies its indefinability. He quotes with approval Dr Radhakrishnan's remark, 'Unreal the world is, illusory it is not.' 'The world in Advaita is variable and it has a value and significance which change with the culture and spiritual insight of the individual who evaluates it.' 'The world is a bridge leading to God . . . it progressively vanishes as much as it is progressively crossed . . . To this extent, the world views of other Vedantic systems are varying evaluations of the world in the course of an inquirer's progress to the summit of Brahman realization.' Dr Warrier holds that he is supported in this interpretation by Sankara himself who 'consistently speaks of the entire creation as a means to realize the sole reality of Brahman.' One is reminded of Fichte in this connection though in a different context. It is also good to be told categorically that the world, factually true, has an objective status of its own and that Sankara himself argues that whatever is, is not necessarily experienced. It is clear that the author holds no brief for any type of subjectivism like the *drsti-srsti vada* etc.

In the chapter on Bondage, the author clearly discusses the nature of *adhyasa* and its several implications including *mukti* and the ways leading to it. *Sadyomukti* and *kramamukti, jivanmukti* and *videhamukti* and the significance of the karma done by the *jivanmukta* are all lucidly discussed.

The author has done ample justice to his subject and the comparative study is very critical and impartial. The book is a substantial contribution to Advaita Vedanta and bears the stamp of hard work done by the author on this subject. He has organized the facts in a brilliant way and this makes it a very good acquisition for the student of philosophy. Unfortunately the book is marred by a very large number of printing mistakes which are far more than the errata given at the end of the volume. The very title on the top of the pages is often wrongly given. One hopes that the book would be free of these blemishes in the next edition. Dr Warrier deserves our warm appreciation for the exhaustive and lucid account he has given of this most important concept in Vedanta.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

THE LIFE BEAUTIFUL: By T. L. Vaswani. Pub. H. P. Vaswani, 91, Warden Road, Bombay-26. Price Rs. 5.

Sadhu Vaswani is a poet of Love who greets the Divine in common humanity and thrills to His presence in the humility of a blade of grass. His one message to suffering man is to leave his old moorings in ego and desire and build up a new Life Beautiful around the Guest who waits within for His hour. The book under review is a fine compilation of the saint's sayings and utterances arranged in the form of a Diary, with one Thought for each day. Prayers, anecdotes, exhortations and aphorisms on different topics — all of them simple and striking — have been arranged under suitable headings and make for elevating reading.

To take one or two at random:

'An ancient story tells of a city sunk in the sea. In the depths the bells are ringing, the song is singing. In silence alone may be heard the bells and the song.

The sea is the Heart. In its depths is the City of God. If thou wilt hear the song that is singing, go into silence. Pause and reflect! Silence will sing to thee!'

Or, 'A wise man of ancient Greece answered well a sceptic who asked a number of questions. "What is the greatest of all things?" "Space is the greatest, for space contains all that has been created."

"What is the best of all things?" "Virtue."

"What is the quickest of all things?" "Thought. For in less than a minute thought can fly to the end of the Universe."

"What is the easiest of all things?" "To give advice."

"What is the most difficult of all things?" "To know thyself."'

M. P. PANDIT.

SPIRITUAL TEACHINGS OF SWAMI ABHEDANANDA: Translated by P. Seshadri Aiyar. Pub. by Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, Calcutta-6. Pp. 55. Price Rs. 3.

This book is an English version of the Bengali book, '*Patra-Sankalan*' (Collection of letters of

Swami Abhedananda). These few letters, written mostly to the house-holder disciples are of immense practical value for any spiritual aspirant. Specially the devotees of the Ramakrishna tradition will be reminded of their Master, Sri Ramakrishna and His godly disciples because of the reverberations of the same inspiring spirit in the pages of this book—complete in its purity, practical wisdom, sincerity, love of God and universal approach to the problems and ideals of religious life and a divine fulfilment or blooming of the spirit in man. The translation is faithful to the original.

BR. SUDHANGSU.

MESSAGE OF THE HOLY MOTHER: Pub. by Advaita Ashrama, 5, Dehi Entally Road, Calcutta 14. Pp. 42. Price 30 nP.

This is a handy compilation of the sayings of Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother, culled from her talks and conversations. Japa, initiation by a Guru, efficacy of the mantra, tapasya, are some of the subjects on which Holy Mother's message has been included in the brochure.

S. P.

THE PRESENT POSITION OF VEDIC RECITATION AND VEDIC SAKHAS: By Dr V. Raghavan. Pub. Veda Dharma Paripalana Sabha (Regd.) Kumbakonam. Pp. 24.

This pamphlet which was published on the occasion of the Vedic convention of the Sabha in Delhi in October, 62, is very informative about the subject which the title indicates. The information is backed up by first-hand knowledge which the author had during his tours as a member of the Sanskrit Commission.

S. P.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS A CIVILIAN: By A. S. Panchapakesa Iyer, M.A., I.C.S., Bar-at-Law. Pp. 474. Pub. by V. Ramaswami Sastrulu & Sons, 292, N. S. C. B. Road, Madras-1. Price Rs. 8.

This is an interesting and informative record of the official life of the veteran Man of Letters, Sri A. S. P. Ayyar. The author in the course of his official duties did not allow his interests in religion or culture to be subdued, or whenever occasions demanded, spare his forthright utterances on men and matters. The book is full of them as well as of descriptive accounts of the various temples, pilgrim centres and historical cities and places, which he had visited right from Pesh up to Udipi.

The author is definitely of the view that a to Tirupati, Palni, Guruvayur and Udipi, 'not brings peace of mind but also a visible lesse of material troubles and affliction' (p. 449), that the recitation of Gita is a 'supreme med for all diseases' (p. 453).

S. RAJAGOPAL

BENGALI

ANDAL: By Byomakesh Bhattacharya. Pub Mirabani Prachar Mandir, Bangalitola, B ras. Pp. 134. Price Rs. 2.

The author is well-known for his writings Bengali) on saints of India and his book on Bai has come in for special appreciation. It a happy inspiration to take up the life of A the famous Vaishnava saint of the South of w little is known in the North. We understand author took pains to visit most of the places a ciated with the saint before writing the pre exhaustive account of her life and message.

After giving a general background of the Al Sri Bhattacharya narrates in detail the kn facts of the find and growth of this unique c of God, her career as the chosen Bride of Lord and the glory of Srirangam. He has a chapters on Andal and other devotee-saints, I sana in the *bhava* of the Gopis, festival of F popularized by Andal, selections from the A hymns rendered into Bengali etc. The book full of quotations from authentic writings on subject and is well got up.

M. P. PAN

BOOKS RECEIVED

THE FLUTE OF NEW LIFE: By G. H mantha Rao, Rajahmundry. Pp. 110. R

THE STEADFAST INTELLIGENCE: By N Bilpodiwala. Published by Sarvodaya churalaya, Tanjore. Pp. 30. Price 50 nP.

OUR ECONOMIC RESOURCES: Pub. by P lication Division, Ministry of Inform and Broadcasting, Government of I Pp. 51. Price 40 nP.

POOR MAN'S SON AND OTHER STORIES: A. S. P. Ayyar. Published by V. Ramasw Sastrulu & Sons, 292, N. S. C. B. Road, M ras-1. Pp. 210. Price Rs. 4.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA CENTER OF NEW YORK

A Vivekananda Centenary dinner was held by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York at the Warwick Hotel on March 28, 1963, with His Excellency U Thant, the Secretary-General of the United Nations as the chief speaker of the evening. For the occasion a large gathering of representative Americans and Indians assembled to pay homage to Swami Vivekananda. Among those present were Swamis Pavitrananda, Nityaswarupananda and Sarvagatananda. The dinner started with the saying of grace by Swami Nikhilananda. As the dinner proceeded Swami Vivekananda memorial stamps issued by the Government of India were distributed.

The after-dinner meeting started with a prayer by Swami Budhananda. Mr. John P. Rutherford, Vice-President of the Center, who was the Toastmaster for the evening, read the messages from His Holiness Swami Madhavananda, President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission; Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, President of the Republic of India; and Prime Minister Pandit Nehru.

In his short introductory speech, Mr. Rutherford reminded the guests of the close tie that existed between each one assembled there and Swami Vivekananda, the channel through which the spiritual legacy of Sri Ramakrishna flowed to the Americans.

The Indian Ambassador, His Excellency B. K. Nehru in a brief speech mentioned the revolutionary impact of Swami Vivekananda's teachings, which were in a large measure responsible for bringing about the freedom of India. And he emphasized that Swami Vivekananda's teachings have value at all times and in all countries. Mr Nehru also mentioned for the information of the gathering that the Vivekananda Centenary will also be celebrated at the Consulate of India and the Community Church in New York in the month of April, and at Asia Society of New York in the month of May.

U Thant paid a moving tribute to Swami Vivekananda as 'one of the greatest men of all times' and 'the greatest spiritual ambassador of India in the history of India'.*

Mr. Vincent Sheean, the noted author, traced the gradual process of Swami Vivekananda's transformation at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna, his work in America, and how he combined in his life and work, mystical experience and social consciousness.

Mr. S. K. Roy, the Consul General of India in New York dwelt upon Swami Vivekananda's impact on older generations and how similar ideas found wonderful expression in the lives of such great men as Tagore and Gandhiji.

In his concluding remarks Swami Nikhilananda mentioned Swami Vivekananda's vision of a Parliament of Man, which in a measure we find fulfilled today in the United Nations.

Proposing a Vote of Thanks Swami Nikhilananda said that U Thant's participation in the function had made manifest its true character, its universality.

Those who participated in the dinner expressed a feeling of exaltation after the function. A New York surgeon perhaps summed up the feeling of all when he said: "It was a rare blessing to be here this evening."

IN BURMA

The Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda was inaugurated at Rangoon under the auspices of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Celebrations Committee for Burma on the 17th January. The celebrations continued up to the 25th January, 1963. An early morning service on 17th January held at the temple of the Ramakrishna Mission Society, 230 Botataung Pagoda Road, Rangoon at 5 a.m. heralded the inauguration in Burma.

A procession with more than 5,000 people with two brilliant life size pictures of Swami Vivekananda was taken out. Students from many institutions participated. It was described as the biggest post-war procession in Burma.

Worship began at 8 a.m. at the temple of the Ramakrishna Mission Society premises, while chanting from the Vedas, readings from the Dhammapada and the short life of Swami Vivekananda and *Homa* were continued. Nearly 500 people attended the worship and were given *prasad*. At 5 p.m. there was a big gathering at the hall of the Society where Thiri Pyanchi U Chit Thoung who played the Master of the Ceremony, welcomed the audience which consisted of about 200 Phongyis (Buddhist monks). Glowing tributes were paid to Swami Vivekananda by the presiding Sayadaw the Ven'ble Agga Maha Pandita

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* The full text of his speech will be published in our August 63 issue.

U Wai Lu Wun who formally inaugurated the Centenary. Swami Atmasthananda, the Secretary of the Ramakrishna Mission Sevashrama (Hospital) read out the message of Swami Madhavanandaji, the President of the Ramakrishna Math & Mission.

The presiding Sayadaw said that Swamiji was so shaped and fashioned in the formative period of his spiritual life, that not only was he able to realize Nirvana but could, as well, elevate the suffering humanity to a higher spiritual and cultural level. He further paid tributes to the Mission in Burma founded by him of which, he said, one healed the body—the other the mind. In concluding, the Sayadaw said that in Swami Vivekananda he found the fulfilment of all that is strength, all that is noble, all that is knowledge.

An eloquent discourse in English was given by Swami Atmasthananda at the Ramakrishna Mission Society premises after the evening service.

Some films of the Embassy of India were screened on the 18th January. On the 19th Swami Swananda gave a discourse on Swamiji's Karma Yoga after evening prayer. On the 20th January a full-meal *prasad* during lunch hours from 11-30 a.m. to 2-30 p.m. was given to about 4,000 people. On the 22nd there was a discourse in English and in Burmese by Ashin Okkahta on the Life and Message of Swami Vivekananda. On the 25th January a musical evening with the local artistes of all communities was held. On the 3rd February a *Kirtan* party sang songs on the life of Sri Krishna.

IN INDIA

The five-day long celebrations of the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda was inaugurated on the 17th January, 1963 at Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Ajmer by Dr Sampurnanand, the Governor of Rajasthan. He also laid the corner-stone of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Students' Home. Since then the celebrations have been held under the auspices of the Ajmer Ashrama, in many places in and near about Ajmer.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS-4

SRI RAMANUJA JAYANTI

On 12th May, 1963 at 6 p.m. a public meeting was held at the Math to celebrate the birthday of Sri Ramanuja. Swami Paramatmananda spoke on the life and teachings of Sri Ramanuja.

SRI BUDDHA JAYANTI

On Sunday, the 19th May, 1963 at 5-45 a public meeting was held to celebrate the b day of Bhagavan Buddha. Prof. K. R. R. S M.A., spoke about 'Gautama Buddha and Thought'. Swami Ranganathananda, Secre Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, C cutta, who presided over the meeting, spoke the pre-Buddhistic, Buddhistic and post-Budd tic periods in the History of the Eternal R gion. He also spoke about the message of Buddha.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION STUDENTS' HO MADRAS-4.

REPORT FOR 1962-1963

The Home has under its management a School, and Technical Section, which are ent residential and self-contained. It has a Co section with provision for boarding and lod only. The strength in the different section the Home during the period under report High School 145; Collegiate 30; Technical Total 281.

Of the total number of boarders, 74 belo to Backward Classes and Scheduled Castes.

In the educational institutions of the Mis the secular teaching is intimately correlate religious and moral training.

The school provides facilities for games al

In addition to the institutions mentioned a there are two Elementary Schools which, th they do not form part of the Home, are the management of the Home Committee. T are the Ramakrishna Centenary Elemen School, Mylapore and the Ramakrishna Mi Higher Elementary School, Mallainkar Chingleput District. The strength of the fi at the end of the year was 437 (254 boys 183 girls). The strength of the second s where Agriculture is taught as a prevocat subject, was 168 (146 boys and 22 girls) on March, 1963.

An important event of the year and in history of the Home is the construction multipurpose Hall in its premises to comm rate the birth centenary of Swami Vivekan the foundation for which was laid by S Swami Kailasanandaji on the 8th March, was opened by Srimat Swami Yatiswaran Maharaj, Vice-President, Ramakrishna Math Mission, on the 6th March, 1963.

.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
Swami Vivekananda

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. L JULY 1963 No. 3

PANCADAŚĪ

प्रत्यक् तत्त्व विवेक

Discussion on the Indwelling Truth

सुप्तोत्थितस्य सौषुप्ततमोबोधो भवेत्स्मृतिः ।
सा चावबुद्धविषयाऽवबुद्धं तत्तदा तमः ॥ ५ ॥

(*Pūrvam*) *suptaḥ*, (a person) who had slept earlier ; (*paścāt*) *uttitaḥ*, and awakened later ; (or) *suptam* (*suṣupti*), dreamless sleep; (*tasmāt*) *uttitaḥ*, awakened therefrom ; *tasya*, his ; *sauṣupta*, of the time of dreamless sleep ; *tamaḥ*, ignorance ; *bodhaḥ*, knowledge ; *smṛtiḥ*, remembrance ; *bhavet*, is ; *sā ca*, that also ; *avabuddha*, experienced ; *viṣayā*, object. *Tat*, that ; *tamaḥ*, ignorance ; *tadā*, at that time ; *avabuddham*, was experienced.

The knowledge of ignorance that existed at the time of dreamless sleep, which comes to a person awakened from it, is only a remembrance, a recollection. But that (remembrance) also is of an object experienced. (From this it follows) that ignorance was experienced at that time, in deep sleep.

It is a peculiar experience that a person has in sound sleep and is very unlike that of the other two states, viz. waking and dream. For instance, a person awakened from deep sleep feels ‘I slept well and did not know anything.’[1] Now *this knowledge of ignorance*, ‘of having cognized nothing’ *in dreamless sleep which comes to a person awakened from it, is only* of the nature of *remembrance* and not an experience, in the ordinary sense of the term. For, ordinarily in the waking, experience comes through the contact of the sense organs — which are in conjunction with the mind, — with their objects ; but deep sleep is a state where both the sense organs and the mind do not function. This is a fact of experience in the world. The scriptures also declare it : ‘When in sleep one does not desire anything, does not see any dream that is called *suṣupti* (deep

(*Continued on Page* 86)

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[1] सुखमस्वाप्सं न किंचिदवेदिषम् ।

SELF-ABNEGATION

Life as Architecture

'Man is the architect of his own fate', said Swami Vivekananda. Life is really an architecture. It substantially answers to Ruskin's description: 'Architecture is the art which so disposes and adorns the edifices raised by man that the sight of them may contribute to his mental health, power and pleasure.'[1] But here the edifice is the character of man. It not only gives pleasure to the builder but even those who occasionally come in contact with him. His power is not for enslavement or destruction but for ensouling and enriching. It is not sensual pleasure that one derives by coming in contact with a pure life. It is, we can almost say, other-worldly, ethereal. It is uplifting and ennobling. Again as Ruskin says about building and architecture, there is a vast difference between an ordinary life and a life built up with a purpose: though all people live, they alone live fruitfully who live with a perspective, a vision.

Mind as a tool

Architecture does not come out of nothing. It requires material and tools to produce it. What are the tools and material that go to form this architecture of man's life? As we said, the edifice of man's life is his character. It is a structure that is not perceived by the physical eyes but by the mind. To quote Sri Ramakrishna, 'Man does not grow two horns' when he becomes great. Neither the aura around him dazzle or pierce the eyes of ordinary mortals like the sun's rays. More practised eyes, that of a yogi, are necessary to discern such a phenomenon. In short no observable physical transformation takes place in man when he builds up his character; but the inner alchemy will be marvellous. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'the touch of the philosopher's stone transforms the iron into gold. The shape does not change can no more cut'. Similarly the res peace that flows in the wake of a pure its only indicator, its only criterion.

Now, the structure of character being s it naturally follows that the tools also m of a finer grain. Mind is such an instru In Indian philosophy it is aptly named *antaḥkaraṇa*, the inner instrument. It i one instrument which to a great extent co the other instruments, the senses. Instru also and not merely material, enter into formation of a product. The excellen the product and the speed with which turned out depend to a large extent o precision instruments made available t worker. Without the wheel and the r potter may manufacture some pots but will not attain the finish one expects. a blunt chisel we may break a stone cannot carve an image. Likewise with a mind or a mind that rests satisfied worldly things, nothing of value shall rialize. Such minds require chaste sharpening, subduing and sometimes tre with heat, beating into shape and temp The architect does all this with his tools by himself or sends them to a smith. B mind being subtle cannot be physically jected to rigorous tests as you do with tools.

Sacrifice as whetstone for the mind

What is the way? Our ancients found the methods. The scriptures almost s 'If you want to enjoy, why be satisfied these mortal things and for a brief pe Go to heaven and enjoy divine imperis things for a long time. But there are s stipulations. You have to restrict your e ments here. You have to acquire d qualities. You have to acquire merit t to heaven, to be one among the gods,' an this they prescribed certain duties, and sacrifices. Ordinarily man thinks of himself and is very self-centred. He hugs to his bosom his wealth and is loathe to part with it. He hoards it and the more he hoards, the more he longs for it. He does not think beyond his own family circle. And when acquisition becomes the one aim of his life he throws propriety to the winds and stoops to any means. Such a tendency is dangerous, nay volcanic. This was to be counteracted. So man was taught to live a life of merit : to 'put by treasures in heaven'. On him was enjoined certain duties : Duty to the parents, to the Rishis, to the devas, to the neighbours and even to the animals, each of which went to liberalize him, to open the windows of his closed mansion of the mind, and brought in new visions. It drew him out of his shell ; made him share his things with others and become humane. It helped him rise above the animal level. Thus sacrifice played the part of the fire, the hammer and the whetstone to mould, temper and sharpen the mind.

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[1] *Seven Lamps of Architecture.* Pub.: George Allen, London, Seventh Edition (1898), p. 13.

Meaning of sacrifice

In this idea of sacrifice is found the seed of self-abnegation, self-denial. For, whatever was considered most covetable on earth by man was enjoined to be offered to the Lord. Man was thus taught to renounce his claims on things desirable, not only ungrudgingly, but voluntarily. May be, there is a desire lurking in the heart of the sacrificer at the outset for gain in the next world, but by degrees when he comes to know that even heavens too are impermanent, that even what he enjoys in those regions is nothing better than here, these desires for enjoyment here and hereafter are annihilated. Having once learnt to give up, no sacrifice becomes too great for him then. He puts the need of the other man before his own. 'Thus by doing works alone should one desire to live a hundred years here. This way alone is open for you who desire not to be entangled by the effects of action here,'[2] says the Īśavāsya Upaniṣad. Sri Krishna forcefully puts this idea in the Gītā thus : 'In this world work done other than for sacrifice leads to bondage.'[3]

Whatever may have been the meaning with which the word *yajna* (sacrifice) was used in the beginning, it has come to have a wider import with the passage of time. The sense is no more restricted to the performance of some rituals in the fire. Sri Krishna extends and amplifies the meaning of sacrifice when he accepts, 'Others there are who sacrifice through gifts, others again who sacrifice through penance, still others who sacrifice through yoga and some others of austere vows are there who sacrifice through study and knowledge of Scriptures.'[4] His list does not end here but what he implies is, that whatever helps man to extend his mental horizon and expand his heart is a sacrifice. All ethics, all morality, all religions teach this one thing : self-sacrifice. Swami Vivekananda says : 'This Nivritti is the fundamental basis of all morality and all religion, and the very perfection of it is entire self-abnegation, readiness to sacrifice mind and body and everything for another being.' Again he repeats : 'First kill your self and then take the whole world as your self ; as the old Christians used to say, 'The old man must die'. This old man is the selfish idea that the whole world is made for our enjoyment.' When we say 'Thy will be done' we must have sacrificed our self to the will of the Lord. That is self-abnegation, self-sacrifice, the supreme sacrifice that man can make. Without this sacrifice none can be truly religious. It is becoming completely unselfish. Buddha taught nothing but self-sacrifice. He was ready to offer himself for the sake of even an animal. There was no limit to his self-abnegation.

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[2] कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतँ समाः ।
एवं त्वयि नान्यथेतोऽस्ति न कर्म लिप्यते नरे ॥
—*Isa U*. 2.

[3] यज्ञार्थात् कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः ।
—*Bhagavad Gita*, 3. 9.

[4] द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योग यज्ञास्तथापरे ।
स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥
—*Ibid.*, 4. 28.

True self-abnegation

Swamiji tells us a beautiful story to impress what really constitutes a sacrifice, a summary of which we give here : 'Once the Pandava brothers performed a great sacrifice. Rich gifts were given and much wealth was spent. People were amazed and declared that the world had not seen the like of it before. But there came a little mongoose half of whose body was golden and the other half brown. And, it began to roll on the floor of the sacrificial hall. Suddenly it cried out, "This is no sacrifice." People were astonished, they demanded from it the reason of such an uncharitable remark. In reply it said, "There was once a little village, and in it there dwelt a poor Brahmin, with his wife, son and the son's wife. They were very poor and lived on small gifts made to them for preaching and teaching. There came in that land a three years' famine, and the poor Brahmin suffered more than ever. At last when the family had starved for days, the father brought home one morning a little barley flour, which he had been fortunate enough to obtain, and he divided it into four parts, one for each member of the family. They prepared their meal with it and just as they were about to eat, there was a knock at the door. The father opened the door and there stood a guest. The poor Brahmin invited the guest and set his own food before him. The guest ate the food but his hunger was not appeased. Then one by one the other members of the family placed their food before the man and when the last morsel was exhausted the guest departed, blessing them. That night those four people died of starvation. A few grains of that flour had fallen on the floor and when I rolled on them half of my body became golden, as you see. Since then I have been travelling all over the world, hoping to find another sacrifice like that, but nowhere have I found one ; nowhere else has the other half of my body been turned into gold. That is why I say this is no sacrifice."' We are apt to miss the moral of the story if we read it casually as a fable. Every word of it is significant. The setting story is in a little village, the persons de are poor and the scene is a time of ex trial. There was no fanfare of a sacrific crowd to applaud, not even the re chance of any one knowing it. It was a fice silently done and with no motive. T self-abnegation ; that is true sacrifice. shall be able to follow better the tre Swamiji's thought if we juxtapose with i ther marvellous utterance of his : 'Even may stand up to hear themselves praised cowards assume the attitude of the when everything is sure to turn out wel the true hero works in silence.'

Utility of self-abnegation

Now we come to the question of uti this virtue of self-abnegation. The p generation is very calculative. It wan know what it will obtain in return fo effort that it may put in. And necessa wants the return to be in a tangible For, it has lost faith in the existence o other world ; the heavens have no mor for it. The people of the age want every here and now. Under the circumstances abnegation apparently seems to be o earthly utility. If one had to sacrifice thing for another, what joy, what pleasure one derive in this world ? But our scri declare quite to the contrary. 'By giv all this may you enjoy. Do not cove one's wealth.'[5] exhorts the Śruti. W meant by this ? Does it not sound pec Has any one enjoyed by giving up ? B of answering these questions we have to ter question ourselves. Whoever has en fully ? Whoever has said 'I had my fill ; I no more ; I am at peace by enjoying the of the world' ? Where is that man wh say he has been all blissful throughout. us take that instance in Buddha's life a young mother felt very sore at the of her only child and came to Buddha

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[5] तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्य स्विद्धन

—Isavasya

prayed to him to revive her darling. 'Mother,' he had said, 'get me some white mustard seeds from a house that has known no bereavement and I shall revive thy child.' Thus he let her find out for herself that sorrow and joy alternated in this universe, and that there was more misery in it than joy. She would not have listened to Buddha if he had given her a sermon when her sorrow was acute; when the wound was fresh. But when she knew for herself, by her search, that not a home existed where there had not been some catastrophe at one time or other, the few words that fell from the lips of the Blessed One were enough to cure her of her sorrow and to impress upon her the evanescence of these worldly objects. Earthly treasures cannot give one joy. Even if the wealth of the whole earth were made over to a man, he would desire still more. There is no end to his desire. Therefore it is only poetic to say that man enjoys by satisfying his desires. Pure bliss is not of this world. And about the bliss of the other world and the state of bodilessness (*jīvanmukti*) we can know only from the scriptures and realized persons.

At this stage we may be asked : What then about those who do not believe in a God but in being mere moralists? Even in their case, we have no hesitation to repeat, what we have already stated, that self-abnegation forms the very basis, very foundation of all morality. As long as man says 'I' first and all others next there cannot be any morality. If everyone was to clamour for his own exclusive right and priority there would be no morality but brutality, the strong would overpower the weak, would try to crush them. Swamiji's categorical remarks in this context are worth noting : 'The watchword of all well-being, of all moral good, is not "I" but "thou". . . . Forget yourselves; this is the first lesson to be learnt, whether you are a theist or an atheist, whether you are an agnostic or a Vedantist, a Christian or a Mohammedan. The one lesson obvious to all is the destruction of the little self and the building up of the Real Self.'

Again it is not a fact that men are not aware of this idea of self-abnegation or that it is totally absent in the generality of mankind. The world would have gone to pieces if such were the case. In each individual we can find these two forces, acquisition and abnegation existing side by side. Even in the animals we can observe these traits. The tiger that plunges its fangs in the human blood is ready to give its life for its young ones. The man who commits murder is ready to sacrifice his life to serve his wife and children. Therefore what is wanted is the extended application of this idea of self-abnegation. Do not limit it to the circle of the family, whom you consider your own; or if you have to, make the whole world your family, your own; or 'enwrap everything in this universe by the Lord,'[6] as the Upaniṣad states. For, as Swamiji observes, 'This renunciation is the only positive power in the universe. The other (acquisition) is only the misguided employment of the power of love.'

And it is a tremendous power — this self-abnegation. All heads bow down before a man of self-sacrifice. It was the ideal of the Brāhmaṇa in the days gone by. He never amassed money, never took to earning money. His profession was to read the scriptures and teach them free — not for any consideration — to those who came to him. The slender gifts that he received went to maintain himself and his students. Thus Brāhmaṇahood symbolised supreme self-sacrifice. His was a life of austerity and penance, and that was why the Brāhmaṇa was given so high a place in society.

Self-abnegation versus *selfishness*

Our valuation of self-abnegation will not be complete or impressive if it is not contrasted with its opposite, acquisition. Before proceeding to say how harmful this acquisition is in spiritual life, let us see how it has helped or ruined the world. History tells us what this demon of acquisition has done when it once entered into the veins of nations. Countries were overrun, blood flowed in rivers, cities were pillaged, people were enslaved and butchered. Man, the living image of God, reduced himself to a being much worse than a despised beast. The seeds of the world wars can be traced to this acquisition, to this selfishness. In the case of religion too it has been the same, only this selfishness went by the name of fanaticism in its case. This is the stark, ghoulish picture of selfishness. Which then will be humanity's choice, acquisition or self-abnegation? On this choice will rest the future of mankind.

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[6] ईशावास्यमिदँ सर्वं यत्किंच जगत्यां जगत् ।
—*Isa Up.* 1.

In the life of the individual too it is possession that makes man selfish. Selfishness makes for attachment, makes us slaves, and this in turn engenders misery. Our goal is freedom from misery, liberation. Therefore, certainly acquisition is not the way to it. Sri Ramakrishna, with his characteristic simplicity and directness, narrates a parable to show into what turmoil these desires force us: 'It is narrated in the *Bhāgavata* that the Avadhuta had twenty-four gurus, one of whom was a kite. In a certain place the fishermen were catching fish. A kite swooped down and snatched a fish. At the sight of the fish about a thousand crows chased the kite and made a great noise with their cawing. Whic way the kite flew with the fish, the crow lowed it. . . . As the kite began to fly in confusion, lo, the fish dropped fro mouth. The crows at once let the kite and flew after the fish. Thus relieved worries, the kite sat on the branch of a and thought: "That wretched fish was root of all my troubles. I have now g of it and therefore I am at peace."' Lik man's miseries do not come to an end as as he does not give up his desires spring from the idea of possession, of s ness, of 'I' and 'mine'.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we shall recollect what S Vivekananda says about self-abnegation unequivocally declares: 'Without this r ciation no yoga is possible.' By giving u little self alone can we come to know Higher Self. Attaining that, man be blessed, liberated, and enjoys 'peace passeth all understanding' even here on What better utility can there be than Further, the possessor of complete self- gation becomes a power that sheds lig the pathways to God. Such is the viri the virtue of self-abnegation.

PANCADAŚĪ

(*Continued from Page* 81)

sleep).'[2] *But that remembrance is also of a thing experienced*. Because memory can only of things experienced. Patanjali says: 'Memory is not allowing (the impression an object experienced to slip away.'[3] The commentator adds, 'and it is recalling consciousness.' *From the above it follows that ignorance* which is of the nature of cognizance, *was experienced in deep sleep* by Consciousness. Thus proving that Consci ness is the only thing that exists through all the three states, viz. waking, dream dreamless sleep.

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[2] यत्र न कंचन कामं कामयते न कंचन स्वप्नं पश्यति तत्सुषुप्तम् ॥ —*Mandukya*. 5.

[3] अनुभूतविषयासम्प्रमोषः स्मृतिः । —*Yoga Sutras*. I.11.

PRASTHANA TRAYA AND ITS BACKGROUND

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

After Agni Indra receives the largest number of praises. Indra is often supposed to be the personification of all power, the Lord of the upper regions, the giver of rain, destroyer of Vṛtra. In the descriptions of Indra again we can find various activities connected with the working of natural forces. The personified form is very indistinct. But we can see several mantras describing Indra as the Lord of the Universe, as the creator of all, as the God of gods, as the indwelling spirit in all the worlds, etc. Again the other Gods like Apāmanapata, Soma, Mitra, Rudra, Viṣṇu etc. also are described rarely as discharging cosmic functions. In the Rig Veda (1. 164. 46 *indram mitram... ekam sat viprā bahudhā vadanti*) we get the idea that the various Gods are but aspects of one *Sat*. The conception of a single principle explaining all else was already in the making when it was said the same Agni dwells in the sky as the sun, as heat in ocean, as warmth of life in the body, as the power that matures plants. It was also implied in ascribing cosmic functions to Indra, Viṣṇu and other Vedic Gods. It, however, became definite and clear in the conception of '*ekam sat*' a term which permeates throughout our philosophical thought. In the Rig Veda we find also some purely philosophic hymns describing one single creator of the whole universe under various names such as *hiraṇyagarbha*, *viśvakarma*, *puruṣa* etc. The indescribable principle is described in the Nāsadiya Sūkta. The Devī Sūkta which forms 10, 125, 1 to 8 of the Rig Veda attributed to the daughter of the Rishi Ambhṛṇa, clearly states that the dṛiṣṭṛi Rishi realized her identity with Paramātman. Another supremely important sūkta of the Rig Veda, held in the highest esteem by all religious sects is the *Puruṣa Sūkta* which foreshadows the Bhakti and Jñāna religion taught in the Upaniṣad and later on. Thus we find in the Rig Veda Samhita itself the central theme of the Hindu religious thought later on elaborately expressed as seen in the following verse :

त्वां ब्रह्म केचिदवयन्त्युत धर्ममेके, एके परं सदसतो:
पुरुषं परेषम् । अन्येऽवयन्ति नवशक्तियुतं परं त्वां,
केचिन्महापुरुषमव्ययमात्मतत्त्वम् ॥

(The Vedantins call Thee Brahman, the Mīmāmsakas call Thee Dharma, the Sānkhyas call Thee superior to Prakṛti and Puruṣa, others (the Pāncharātras) call Thee the Lord of nine powers and still others (the Yogis) call Thee Mahāpuruṣa. Thou art the Changeless Ātmatattwa — *Bhāgavata* 8-12-9.) The Puruṣa sūkta of the Rig Veda for the first time brings out the idea that God is immanent and transcendent.

Again we get here the statement that the Reality is Timeless; that is to say, It is the basis of past, present and future. The term Puruṣa is again one of the greatest discoveries of religion and philosophy. That term is explained in the Veda itself as the Spirit or *ātman* dwelling in and filling all that exists. (*pūrṇatvāt puruṣaḥ, puriśayanāt puruṣaḥ*). Just as the human body is filled with the life principle through and through, so also all that exists is filled by the Divine principle here called Puruṣa. This is the only significance the word has in this Vedic context. The biological gender of man and woman does not occur here. *Pumān* and *strī* are the terms used to make this distinction. The use of the term puruṣa denoting male became common only much later when to distinguish from the male, the Puruṣa of the Rig Veda was called *ādi puruṣa*, *mahāpuruṣa* or *parama puruṣa* or *puruṣottama* of the Bhagavad Gītā. The Rig

Veda Samhita refers to the performance of Yajña and the four priests *Ṛtvik, hotā, udgātā* and *brahman* in a fundamental manner. But the institution of Yajña became an elaborate and central factor in the Yajur Veda Samhita. God was conceived as Puruṣa who through a great sacrifice created the world according to the Puruṣasūkta of the Rig Veda. The same Puruṣa is described also as the father of all creation or Prajāpati in one of the Rig Vedic Hymns. The Yajur Veda Samhita contains descriptions of the various Yajñas beginning with *darsapurnamasa iṣṭi*.

In the Vedic society, yajña was considered the governing principle of life. The world was created for Yajña and from Yajña. All the human beings are to take part in Yajña in some capacity or other ; each individual's life also had to be designed to serve the purpose of Yajña. Self-restraint, division of labour, social co-operation, faith in a supreme Principle which governs actions, persons, places and things as the goal of Yajña and sacrifice of one's own personal desires for the sake of promoting the Yajña — all these social and spiritual principles were developed through the institution of Yajña. The Taittiriya Samhita 3. 3. 7. 3 to 4 has this statement. *indrasya vā eṣā yajñiyā tanuḥ yat yajñaḥ* — what is called Yajña is the worshipful body of Indra. We have seen that Indra is the Supreme Lord according to some of the verses of Rig Veda. Here the Yajña is identified with the Supreme Being. In the *Hiraṇyagarbha Sūkta* of the Rig Veda the question is repeatedly asked *kasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema* 'to which God shall we offer worship'. And the qualities and attributes of one creator is described and in the last verse Prajāpati is referred to by name. In the Yajur Veda Prajāpati is also identified with Yajña. It is very natural for man to understand spiritual truths in the human way only.

Father is the recognized head of a family. Prajāpati is the house father and the father of the Universe. As the father of the Universe, the Devas and Asuras are his children. In the *Chāndogya* and *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣads* also we get references to Prajāpati a father of all. Indra and Agni were addressed as Father in the Rig Veda. that rudimentary idea of Fatherhood of is fully developed in the conception of pati. Yajña was created by Prajāpati. obligatory on the part of men to w Prajāpati through Yajña. Finally Pra was considered both the form and spi Yajña. In and through Yajña all tures expressed their relation of m helpfulness and their relation with Creator. A house father is the central in a family group. The duties for all members are prescribed by him and he protector, refuge and teacher of the Other members in their turn discharge mutual duties and duties towards God. larly the whole world of created beings interdependent and dependent upon whose *upāsana* is conducted through Yaj

Some of the Yajñas were done in a simple way and were either only of subj importance or even when there was ne other persons the number required was small. But there were other Yajñas lik Rājasūya and Aśwamedha which were of national significance and in which thou of people were involved. At the comp of such a great Yāga we find prayers u by the chief officiating priest for the w of the whole community in solemn word this :

आब्रह्मन् ब्रह्मणो ब्रह्मवर्चसी जायतां, अस्मि
राजन्यः ईषव्यः शूरो महारथो जायतां दोग्ध्री
वोढाऽनुड्वान् आशुः सप्तिः पुरन्धिर्योषा जिष्णु
सभेयो युवास्य यजमानस्य वीरो जायतां, निकामे
नः पर्जन्यो वर्षतु, फलिन्यो न ओषधयः प
योगक्षेमो नः कल्पताम् ॥

Taittiriya Brāhmaṇa 3.

'In the Brahmana Varṇa let every one b to great learning and study. In this kin may the Kshatriya be heroic, valorous and c of defending the state and driving away the May the cows give plenty of milk ; may the be strong enough for carrying the weig pulling the plough, may the horses be s

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may the women have noble qualities that would attract the thought of all citizens. May heroic sons be born to the Yajamana; sons who will be victorious and accomplished to face an audience. May we get plenty of rain whenever there is need; may the crops be rich and fruitful and finally may we have safety and protection through the preservation of what we have and getting what we want.'

From the description of the Yajña we can understand that it involves physical and mental actions. It must be remembered that the division of Śruti into *karmakāṇḍa, upāsanakāṇḍa* and *jñānakāṇḍa* is a recent creation of the Advaitic teachers. The Viśiṣṭādvaitis and Dwaitis do not find reasons for this separation. According to them, the whole Veda teaches *upāsana* or worship of God which involves knowledge or jñāna as well as karma or ritual. According to them Jñāna is only mental absorption in the object of *upāsana* or knowledge of the attributes and qualities of God. Karma in their scheme represents what action is laid down in the Vedas. So Upāsana is the principal factor to which all else is subordinated. This is the view elaborately reasoned about by *Purvamīmāmsa* and according to its interpretation every part of the Veda strictly follows this system. Accordingly *upāsana* taught by the Veda falls under three main divisions: 1. *karmāngabhūta*, 2. *karmasamuccita* and 3. *karmasthānīya. Upāsana* here means continuous thought of a religious object. By religious objects we have to understand a Mantra, Devatā or actions connected with Yajña as described in the Veda. In the first division stated above, the rites are performed with full attention to the positioning of the instruments of Yajña. In the second case the two are separated and karma alone is done at sometime or in some place and meditation is done at another time, in another place. And in the third Division there is no physical action, but pure meditation alone is advocated. Here objects and ingredients are not required. The whole upāsana is a mental process. This is also called *prasakhyāna*. The Advaitins before Śankarāchārya accepted this view of the Mīmāmsakas and considered it necessary for the attainment of Ātmajñāna. We find here the performer becoming more and more inward. All these three types of *upāsana* and *karma* are found in the Samhitas, Brāhmaṇas, Āranyakas and Upaniṣads. But pointed attention is specially drawn to the last type of *upāsana* in the Upaniṣads and therefore that alone has assumed special importance in the study of philosophy. The *agnirahasya* taught in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, agnicayana* taught in the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇā*, the *mahāvṛta* referred to in *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* etc. teach pure meditation of the last type which is the root of Brahmavidyā elaborated in the Upaniṣads. Here *yajña* becomes purely mental and from this state of pure contemplation to the highest jñāna taught in the Upaniṣads, the link is closest. There is a tendency among some students of the Vedas in recent times to say that the karmakaṇḍa of the Vedas is of no importance as they refer only to some primitive rituals and so they should be thrown out keeping only the philosophical portion. This is not commendable, because, the relation between jñāna and karma is so close that it is impossible to neglect the one without hurting the other.

While the Yajur Veda is mainly based on the institution of Yajña, the Sāma Veda is not so important because, as we have seen, it is mostly based on the verses of Rig Veda and the chanting of it is meant only to be one of the items of the Yajña. Sri Sāyanācārya to whom we owe, more than to anybody else within the last 2000 years, the revival of Vedic life and the understanding of the meaning of Vedas, has considered Yajur Veda to be of greater significance than all the other Vedas, because according to him, Yajña is the heart of Vedic life; Yajur Veda fixes the form of the Yajña and other Vedas are only helpful for that. As a way of life and conduct, Yajña was central to religion and so being brought up in the *upāsana* tradition, he wrote the Bhaṣya on Yajur Veda first and interpreted all the Samhitas in the light of the Yajña giving an alternative meaning to the *adhyāt-*

mika and philosophic interpretation wherever it was found outstanding.

The Atharva Veda Samhita contains many philosophical thoughts and ideas which connect themselves to the Upaniṣads. All the spiritual ideas found in the Upaniṣads and concepts such as *brahman, prāṇa, ātman* and the like are also found here in their full Upaniṣadic significance. The *puruṣa* of the Rig Veda who became Prajāpati in the Yajur Veda has now become known under the name Brahman and Ātman and Prāṇa. The Atharva Veda also contains much material that is useful for effecting individual, domestic and social happiness as required by the people of the time.

For a study of the main thoughts of the Upaniṣads it is necessary to trace the background of some of its main words such as *puruṣa, brahman, ātman* and the like. The term Brahman denoting the Absolute Reality current in some of the Upaniṣads can be traced in its radical form to the Rig Veda Samhita. In the Rig Veda, the term Brahma is used several times to denote an Rik or Mantra. *Bhāradvājasyedam brahma* means this Sūkta or mantra is after *Bharadvāja*. All the collection of such mantras are also called Brahma and slowly by extension, the spiritual truth taught by the Veda as well as the discipline required for acquiring the Veda also came to be called *Brahma. Vedaḥ tattvam, tapo brahma.* 'The term Brahma denotes Veda, the Tattva taught in the Veda and the tapas required to learn the Veda and realize the *tattva.*' To this central word Brahma are connected *brahmavidyā, brahmayajña, brahmachārī, brāhmaṇa, brāhmaṇya* and the like.

The term Brahman, has its mental form Brahma in singular number and Brahmā in masculine gender. In the neutral form we have seen that it denotes the mantra of the Śruti, the supreme Reality and Tapas. The term is derived from the root *Bṛh* which means to swell or to grow. Vedic mantras are not a mere report of what has been perceived outside by the senses. They have grown out of an inward realization of the supersensuous truths. The Gītā verse *bāhya* sp *asaktātmā . . . sukhamakṣayamaśnuté* as *sukhena brahmasamsparśa* etc. tell us contrast between *bāhyasparśa* or the ext sense life of the mind and *brahmasamsp* the superior felicity born of the realizati Brahman which is possible only when turns away from sense-pleasures and perc the inward truth. When one strikes hidden spring of the waters of life, a flo illumination comes and envelops the who existence. This illumination reveals the principle that is greater than all that is which is the perfect, which is infinite an background of all. It may not be that mantra directly portrays this realization pletely. But there are many mantras su tive of this : namely that the mantras wer verbalization of internal spiritual realiz The remaining mantras though they may to other matters, they were also made o analogy of this. Thus *Brahman* n denoting the supreme Truth is a gradual lopment from the sense of *Brahman* as mantra based on inward realization an verbal expression. One of the greatest coveries of the Vedic Ṛṣis was *tapas* me spiritual fervour, or thought concentratio religious zeal or self-abnegation and rej of sense-pleasures as the only effective of accomplishing any cherished spiritual It is a common practice to praise the as the end, to make it (means) effective. tapas itself is called *Brahma*, in the 'B Valli' of *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* and other

We now turn to the cognate word *Bra* in the masculine gender. Primarily the Brahman stood for the superintending di of the yajña who was expected to be per thorough with every part of the Veda an sacrificial act. He had no function to charge in the yajña but had to be pr always on his seat guiding, correcting, ins ing and inspiring the whole procedure was honoured more than all for his sp abilities, complete knowledge and ex status. This supremacy of Brahman in yajña leads us to think about him not on the brain behind the whole institution of yajña which had its counterpart in the creation of the universe itself, but also as a person of the highest spiritual realization and repository of all knowledge and the person behind the universe conceived as its creator. So, we get later on the idea that Brahmā has four heads representing four Vedas, having as his consort *Vāk* or Saraswati (implying that *vāk* or speech is produced by Brahmā and is always with him giving pleasure and serving his purpose). Gradually the term Brahmā came to denote either the seer of a mantra or the learner and user of a mantra, or one who expounds the meaning of a mantra or Veda or any one belonging to that class whose duty is the performance of one or more of the functions enumerated just now. In this sense the term *Brahman* and its derivative *Brāhmaṇa* came to be used as interchangeables. The term Brāhmaṇa denoting the person of that class is also used in all these senses.

There is another important meaning of the word Brāhmaṇa implied by a difference in the accent, namely that part of the Veda which is not called mantra or Samhita. As a class of literature this includes also what is known as *Āraṇyaka* and *Upaniṣad*. According to the canons of the yājniks all mantras are *anuṣṭhāna smāraka* (what reminds about the performance to be done). From what we have said above, it is clear that the Division Brāhmaṇa is very wide and inclusive. Traditionally the *lakshaṇa* of *Brāhmaṇa* is given thus :

हेतुः, निर्वचनम्, निन्दा, प्रशंसा, संशयो, विधिः,
परिक्रिया, पुराकल्पो, व्यावधारण कल्पना ॥

This means the *Brāhmaṇa* portion describes the purpose of the mantras, sometimes etymology, disapproval and approval, doubts that are to be thrashed, commands, specifications, incidents of the past and other special items of interest. Even Itihāsa and Purāṇa, meaning only legends and stories, are found here. This is a vast literature of great interest, many view points, though ordinarily neglected because of the difficulty of study. It is a mine where one should search for the detailed development of the institution of yajña, where one can find the simplest and forceful prose writings of the oldest date, where we can trace the intermediate stages through which the polished Sanskrit language emerged from the earliest Vedic Sanskrit, where one should look, for the indistinguishable beginnings of Purāṇic legends, legal maxims, linguistic observations, philosophic groupings and the like.

In continuation of the Brāhmaṇa literature we get in somewhat similar style, a group of works called *kalpasūtras*, which have two main divisions called Śrauta sūtra and Gṛhya sūtra, respectively dealing with the ways of performing Vedic yajñas already laid down in the Brāhmaṇas and those rites and duties that are to be regularly performed by a Gṛhastha. These are in the form of Sūtras or condensed prose formulas. They are also honoured as Vedic literature. Smṛtis and Purāṇas in verses are an elaboration and extension of the main subject matter of the above works (sūtras) to suit the needs of later generations. Bodhāyana, Āpastambha, Kātyāyana, Satyashada etc., are the authors of the Śrauta sūtras, Dharma sūtras and Gṛhya sūtras.

(To be continued)

Two ideals of truth are in our Scriptures, the one is, what we call the eternal, and the other is not so authoritative, yet binding under particular circumstances, times and places. The eternal relations which deal with the nature of the soul, and of God, and the relations between souls and God, are embodied in what we call the Shrutis, the Vedas. The next set of truths is what we call Smritis.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE CONSCIOUS AND THE UNCONSCIOUS

SWAMI NITYABODHANANDA

Modern psychology makes great store of the unconscious as the source of our liberty. In fact, the 'cultivated' unconscious may be utilized in daily life. I use the term 'cultivated' to refer to the adult unconscious and thereby to distinguish it from that of the child, which does not respond in the same way. Thus we can awake in the morning at a time decided on the night before. We endeavour to exercise an influence on our unconscious by means of suggestion, that is to say by repeating to ourselves at the time of falling asleep that we must awake at a certain time. The act of waking at the time suggested is a spontaneous act, not provoked by any exterior factor. It is thus a complete act, or, a free act in a sense different from the one given by existentialists to this term.

This spontaneous act, this faculty to wake up at a specified time, is proof of the autonomy and the creativity of our unconscious. By the aid of suggestion, supported by interest, we act on our unconscious and we can thus utilize it for the objective we have in mind. We shall see later that we can also act on our unconscious in our spiritual life with the help of an ideal. Finally, we can, before falling asleep at night, put a problem to our unconscious to resolve (be it a personal or a mathematical problem!) and our unconscious will give us the answer in the morning on waking. This proves that our unconscious can reveal all its strength and value during sleep, when it is free from all the censures and automatisms of the waking state. Our unconscious can also be used at other times than during sleep; when we are relaxed, when we are 'open' and available — during holidays, for instance — the true wealth of our unconscious reveals itself to us and we receive the inspiration to create something new. It is, thus, our unconscious which contains the treasure of creativity.

As we have said when we are relaxed freely available, our unconscious bec more open. We then reach another, a profound level of personality. We there reserves of energy, and a power which we not had before and which is now at disposal. We could not have used th other times in our life because circumst and our own attitude prevented our un cious from revealing itself fully.

Nevertheless, without our knowing it unconscious is constantly at work. Every passes through the unconscious. There constant conversion from the conscious t unconscious and *vice versa*. The uncons is like a work-room where everything w later reveals itself externally is formul We are able, by deferring action, by t the time for a retreat, an interiorisatio achieve a more complete vision of th This is what we do when we take tim reflect. We forget the outside world, withdraw into ourselves, where we are a In the work-room of the unconscious, eve phrases that we wish to use, take a perfect form. During sleep, reflectio meditation (not only meditation on a pers God or a spiritual matter, but any medita we turn towards the unconscious, which give us all its wealth, all its reserves, th allowing us to create.

We have, so far, seen the uncons working for us as a friend, either by allo us to awake at a certain hour, or by reso our problems or, finally, by allowing u create. But the unconscious can also a an enemy. This is the case when it re us and refuses to submit to our will. W someone can be both our friend and en this shows the strength and the neutral cha ter of that person. It is then our own res sibility to make of that person either a fr or an enemy. As Sri Ramakrishna said

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is neither good nor bad. It seems bad to us, if it is used to burn down a house, and good if it is used to read holy writings. The unconscious is a neutral energy which may become our friend or our enemy. It is our enemy while we have not become master of it. As soon as we have proved our superiority to the unconscious, its power is at our service; it is our friend only when we have mastered it.

Here are two examples of resistance to the unconscious. In a book by Dr. Schultz 'le training autogène' the patient tries to obtain a decontraction of the whole body by concentrating first on the hand or the arm and by suggesting to himself that they are heavy and hot. When this local suggestion is effective, the whole of the body relaxes and becomes hot. The patient who is successful with this exercise tells himself: 'I feel marvellously dead.' But it takes a long time to obtain this decontraction which indicates that there is resistance on the part of the unconscious. This method has great analogy with that employed in Yoga decontraction. In both the attention is fixed on a certain point, one is absorbed in it, and the rest of the body is forgotten and relaxed. However, the point of fixation is different; in the Schultz decontraction, it is a physical point, in Yoga decontraction the attention is fixed on a spiritual idea. In the first instance one obtains a physical relaxation and in the second a mental relaxation — with the consequent physical relaxation that this automatically brings. The choice of subject of meditation is very important in order to obtain the Yoga decontraction; one must fix one's attention on a subject that can absorb all levels of one's personality: affective, intellectual, etc. All is then relaxed. Our attention is expanded, also our memory and area of consciousness. In Schultz's book we find examples of people who do not succeed in relaxing, or in awaking at a certain time by suggestion. Their unconscious is resisting them. In effect, in order to achieve the spontaneous act of decontraction or awakening at a fixed time, the suggestion must pass via the unconscious which in this case opposes the suggestion. It thus acts as an enemy.

The second example of hostility is taken from the book, *Zen in the Art of Archery*. The Zen master teaches that the hand must be relaxed at the moment of launching the arrow. It would appear to be a contradiction to wish to stretch the bowstring and at the same time to keep the muscles completely relaxed. In spite of his efforts, the Westerner, the author of the book never completely succeeded in doing this. In spite of all the repeated suggestions given to his unconscious, it refused to obey him. We often say that we are mentally relaxed and no one can verify this assertion. By contrast, one can verify the state of contraction or decontraction of the muscles. One can thus observe in this example of archery whether the unconscious has acted as a friend or an enemy.

These different examples prove that the unconscious can lose its neutral character and, mastered by a strong will, become an instrument in our hands.

What do we mean when we call the unconscious 'neutral'? There is nothing artistic, nothing beautiful in the unconscious of an artist. Neither is there any science in the unconscious of the doctor or engineer. The unconscious contains neither forms nor categories, it is in this way that it is neutral. It does not even contain the archtypes of Jung. The unconscious is a power, a source of creativity. It is a dynamism which coordinates the facts of experience and orientates them towards transcendence. Thus we become capable of adapting ourselves to circumstances, we become flexible, because the unconscious acts as a filter. We have said that the unconscious of an adult differs from that of a child. Faced with a small event — such as the loss of a small coin which was entrusted to him — the child is immediately upset, in tears. An adult would search for the lost coin before allowing himself to be affected by the event. He would wish to have the certitude of having lost it before regretting the loss. The child, on the other hand, reacts immediately and violently. The adult has a much greater 'flexibility' in the face of circumstances, because his unconscious is more cultivated he is better able to support a misfortune, to accept it and to react less.

We find the same thing in the spiritual domain. The unconscious of a person who is spiritually very advanced is less subject to influence than that of a person less mature in this respect. The latter, after reading something which stirs him will have a sudden urge for renunciation. A more evolved person would not react so rapidly; there would be a period of latency due to the maturity of his unconscious. Such a person would not be carried away by the enthusiasm of renunciation; he would analyze, that is to say he would allow his unconscious to 'digest' this ideal. He would thus be more stable when he finally takes the decision to renounce. A more childish person spiritually would not ask himself to what extent he could digest the new spiritual ideal, and thus after some time of renunciation he would return to his former way of life.

Our flexibility, our capacity to endure suffering comes from the unconscious. The unconscious works continually in this way even without our knowledge. It acts as a filter we have said; progressive forgetfulness, the lessening of the acuteness of suffering as time passes, is the proof of this. The unconscious absorbs and neutralizes our suffering and thus gives us the power to suffer. From the unconscious also comes the faculty of adaptation, the possibility of integrating ourselves with a spiritual ideal. We have seen that our spiritual capacity comes from the unconscious and we might ask ourselves what is the difference between the self and the unconscious. The unconscious is the expression of the will of the self. The unconscious is the verifiable dynamism of the self, the manner in which the self reacts in response to a given situation. The spiritual self which is our Being, has no character; one cannot define it. One can only see its manifestation in the form of the unconscious.

Indian psychology and philosophy do use the term 'unconscious', but the idea is nearest to it is that of the 'Samskar tendencies. There are two kinds of these dencies: (1) individual and personal te cies, and (2) collective acquired tende This classification is analogous to Jung's. lective tendencies are inherited from parents, according to Jung. Jung did envisage a series of rebirths, he could therefore believe, as Hindus do, that tend are inherited from earlier lives. The un cious of Jung is very different from th Freud. With Freud, the unconscious is powerful and can be anti-social; it c from the libido. For Jung, there could collaboration between the conscious an unconscious, which is not anti-social. Ac ing to Hindu belief collective tendenci acquired in the course of the earlier liv the individual. Naturally, both mani and latent tendencies may be either go bad. If the climate is favourable, such such a dormant tendency may develop. Indians believe that certain of our tendencies can be awakened, and with assistance we can dominate the bad tend which have manifested themselves in us. possibilities of developing ourselves spir are infinite, since the creative power o unconscious is infinite. This belief is ess in all Indian philosophy. We can thus in ourselves a nucleus of good tendenc developing, through an appropriate en ment certain tendencies which are dorm us. With the aid of this spiritual nucle can overcome our bad tendencies thereby lose their power. This belief inexhaustible creativity of the spiritu conscious allows the Hindus to believe liberation in this body. They believe th spite of our numerous defects, in spite the obstacles which accumulate in our we can become free here below and our body as a light garment'. The b no longer an obstacle to spiritual life; no longer slaves to everything that mak human.

Naturally we remain limited to a level of determined factors; we remain subordinated by the factor of 'necessity'—I am a man, born in India, my face is such and such, etc. But at another level our liberty and creative possibilities are infinite; we have infinite possibilities to love, to be intelligent, to lead a spiritual life. This unlimited power which Hindus attribute to the unconscious arises from the fact that, for them, the unconscious is a spiritual power. By basing ourselves on the infinite spiritual wealth of the unconscious we can improve ourselves unceasingly. This is an essential concept in Hindu philosophy.

The concept of the unconscious which we find in Jung's work resembles that of the Hindus, except that Jung does not attribute a spiritual * character to the unconscious. But, on the other hand, he also attributes to man infinite possibilities of renewal. These possibilities do not exist in animals. The instinct to love, for instance, may manifest itself by a very brutal impulse or by a very subtle sentiment, or finally might manifest itself by the creation of an organization such as the United Nations, the expression of universal love. Between these two extremes there is a whole range of possibilities belonging to the unconscious. In our spiritual life we should know how to use all these possibilities of the unconscious. When we know how to use them they should help us to progress.

I have been asked in this connexion how we can bring a larger part of the unconscious into evidence, or how one can develop it, how to dominate it, finally how precisely to utilise its possibilities. I must first remind you that the unconscious can never be explored directly; one can only analyze the manifestations of it. One can thus analyze the cause of a conflict in which we find ourselves and thus understand better the unconscious. This analysis can be made by various psychological methods, by the analysis of our mental processes. But it is rare to be able to do this alone, caught up as we are in the conflict. In general, we need the assistance of someone who is detached with regard to this conflict and, by this fact capable of being able to see it.

We wish moreover, to have a feeling of security as to the response which the unconscious will give to our solicitations; the certitude that the unconscious will respond in case of need. It is precisely towards this that our whole evolution is leading; to enlarge the area of consciousness by developing our latent tendencies, by creating in ourselves reflexes, spontaneous actions such as waking up at a specified time. When an artist paints several times the same subject, but each time in a different way, he is said to have evolved. In fact what is happening is precisely the enlargement of the area of the conscious in relation to the area of the unconscious; it is an annexation of the unconscious by the conscious. This process is constantly at work within us. We have seen it in the example of suffering, the acuteness of which diminishes in the course of time. The development of the unconscious is impossible because it is autonomous; we can quicken those processes by spiritual or psychological techniques; those processes by which it digests and neutralizes all those circumstances and gives us spontaneity. We have seen that meditation is precisely one of the spiritual techniques which, by the increased attention which it produces, hastens these processes of the unconscious.

One dominates the unconscious by the will. But this does not mean a determined will to conquer the unconscious directly, or to fight against an intellectual activity which prevents us from benefiting from the dynamism of the unconscious. The will of which we should make use is attached to a superior, a spiritual aspiration, and it acts as a unifying, a liberating force. It is the spiritual idea, of which we spoke at the beginning and which acts like suggestion on the unconscious to dominate it.

What is the relation between the unconscious and intuition? Intuition is a piercing of the

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* Though Jung on rare occasions refers to the unconscious in terms of the 'spiritual', his signification is not what Indian thought gives to the word spiritual.

unconscious — to use a term dear to Meister Ekhart. It gives a different kind of knowledge from that obtained through the normal mechanism for acquiring knowledge. It appears when this normal mechanism is transcended. We reach through intuition a different level of our being from that reached through knowledge. Intuition is in fact 'direct vision'. An unexplored region of our unconscious is suddenly revealed. The knowledge attained through ordinary intuition is not always correct or valid. We have proof of this in scientific intuitions which give knowledge that becomes outdated. By contrast, the knowledge attained through metaphysical intuition is eternally true. Thus with regard to the nature of man, scientific conceptions vary over the centuries, proving the dynamism of science, whereas the spiritual intuition that 'the nature of man is divine' is true for all time. We cannot fabricate an intuition. The eruption of an intuition, like creativity, happens without our being able to intervene. We can prepare the ground, that is all. The moment of creativity is a state of perfect neutrality, and therefore of perfect liberty. For some this liberty is attained in relaxation, for others in what would seem to us stimulants. One prepares for it through relaxation or through what seem to be stimulants. This liberty is independent and on another plane from the one which gives an artist his technique — a technique which enables him to accept to be bound by a form which he is going to express. The moment of inspiration is a moment of plenitude, where the desire to express oneself in any particular form is absent. This neutral moment is the moment of true artistic or spiritual enjoyment.

PERSONALITIES IN THE LIFE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Trailinga Swami : Trailinga Swami was a great sannyasi and saint, who lived on the banks of the Ganga at Banaras. Sri Ramakrishna had met him when he had been to Banaras, in the company of Mathur Babu and used to say that the saint was a living embodiment of Śiva. Swamiji too had an opportunity to meet this great saint, during his itinerary in 1888 at Kasi. But at that time Trailinga Swami was observing a vow of silence and therefore Swamiji had not much talk with him.

Pavahari Baba : Swamiji came in contact with Pavahari Baba at Ghazipur (in U.P.). He used to live in a cave, dug out of the ground, when he would be immersed in his spiritual practices. At other times, 'he would be living in a room about the mouth of his cave, and during this time he would receive visitors'. His humility and intense self-realization fascinated Swamiji, with the result that he stayed on at Ghazipur to meet the saint and have his company. Swamiji met him several times. From some of Swamiji's letters we come to understand that Pavahari Baba too came to have a strong attraction for Swamiji. 'His humility' says Swamiji 'sprang naturally from the realization of that which he once so beautifully explained to us, "O King, the Lord is the wealth of those who have nothing — yes, of those," he continued, "who have thrown away all desires of possession, even that of one's own soul."' Swamiji at the end of the beautiful sketch of this saint remarks, 'The present writer owes a deep debt of gratitude to the departed saint.'

Babu Pramadadas Mitra : Another person whom Swamiji met at Banaras was Babu Pramadadas Mitra, the great Sanskrit scholar. A close friendship developed between them. Swamiji wrote many letters asking 'advice of Pramadadas in interpreting the Hindu scriptures'.

Sharat Chandra Gupta : Swamiji on his way to Hardwar had alighted at the station Hathras. There he met the station-master

(*Continued on Page* 103)

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(Latu Maharaj)

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

Chapter X (*continued*)

Since 1882 the devotees have been celebrating the Master's birthday. All expenses were borne by them, especially by Suresh Mitra and Rama Datta. On this occasion, as afterwards, Lātu had no end of works. After the hard day's labour, when Lātu was about to take a little rest Manmohan Babu sent him on a chare. He finished that gladly and quickly. That was hardly done when Sri Ramakrishna asked him to go to a devotee's house. The devotee could not come, due to pressure of work, to join in the celebration. So the gracious Master sent consecrated food to the devotee through Lātu. Even this did not irritate Lātu. He came to the devotee's house but did not return that night to Dakshineswar. He spent the night there. We record below the conversation Lātu had with Narendranath the next day :

Narendra : 'I find you so early in Calcutta, how is that ? When did you come ? How is the Master ?'

Lātu : 'Yesterday we had a nice celebration there. Why did you not go there ? He inquired of you many times. Let us go there together. He wants to meet you.'

Narendra : 'I have no time to go there now. My examination is drawing near. Can I afford to waste time in the company of that madcap of a Brahmin ?'

Lātu (a little surprised) : 'Whom are you referring to as a madcap ? The Master, I am sure, is not the target. For who else but he can keep his head cool under all circumstances ?'

Narendra : 'Yes, Yes, I know all that. He is so cool-headed as not to be able to take care of the cloth around his waist ; with a little surge of emotion his hands and legs bend and twist ; if anyone utters the Lord's name he starts dancing violently ; he goes to all places, among ladies and gentlemen bare-bodied ; he has no sense of self-respect. Then again there is jugglery in him ; one he hypnotizes, another he mesmerizes ; so on and so forth.' Then all on a sudden Narendra changed his tone and said softly, 'Well, you stay with him day and night. Is he always found surcharged with divine fervour ? Does he not sleep at night ?'

Lātu : 'I have been with him day and night over this long period. But I have never seen him behaving improperly or hypnotizing or mesmerizing anybody. If you have heard anything like that it is all misrepresentation. I have stayed with him over months. I have never heard anyone dubbing him as a madcap. On the contrary, many big folks are nowadays coming to him. The other day Keshab Sen came, and that other gentleman with a long flowing beard. That day he held a long conversation with Keshab Babu.'

Naren : 'Can you tell me what the topic was ?'

Lātu : 'That day Master conversed on meditation and contemplation on God. That day he praised you highly. Keshab Babu also talked about many things.'

Naren changed the topic and asked Lātu. 'Well, tell me if Rākhal goes there or not.'

Lātu : 'Yes, he goes there. Even passes one or two nights in his company. Master loves him dearly. He makes him sit close to him and feeds him and cuts jokes with him. The other day he took him to Mother and said, "Here is your child, accept him, please." Mother too was very glad. Master gave us sweets to eat.'

Naren : 'He spoke of Rākhal as his child ?'

Lātu : 'True. I have heard it myself.'

We heard this conversation from the lips of Mahendra Datta, Narendra's second brother.

* * *

One day, lunch over, Sri Ramakrishna asked Rākhal, his spiritual child, to prepare a betel-roll for him. He said, 'Rākhal dear, there is not one betel-roll left; do go and prepare some for me.' Rākhal replied, 'I do not know how to prepare rolls.' Master: 'How strange! To prepare betel-rolls — does one undergo apprenticeship to learn it? Go, prepare some and bring them here.' Still Rākhal showed no sign of making a move. Lātu got annoyed at this. Rākhal took no notice of his annoyance. On the contrary, as if to tease him all the more he again and again disobeyed Sri Ramakrishna. Lātu's patience was taxed. In the presence of the Master he told Rākhal, 'What are you doing, Rākhal Babu? Should one speak to him that way? Will you not carry out his orders? And you are arguing with him? You are not showing good manners.' These angry words of Lātu fanned Rākhal's ire, and he blurted out, 'If thou thinkest like that why dost thou not go and do it thyself. I will not do it. I have never done it in my life. Today I am not going to do it; no, not even at his request.'

At this Lātu's anger reached a high pitch and he went on saying inarticulately many things in his half-Bengali and half-Hindi language.

The Master was enjoying the scene and in order to share it with his nephew Ramalāl, called him there. When he arrived there the Master said laughingly, 'Just see the fight between the two. Well, tell me who is a greater devotee — Rākhal or Lātu?' Ramalāldādā understood the joke and said, 'I think Rākhal is the superior of the two.'

This remark of Ramalāl's threw Lātu into a paroxism of rage and he stammered out, 'Ah! what a judgment? He disobeyed the Master, and he is a greater devotee!'

These angry words made the Master laugh and he said, 'You are right, Ramalāl. Yes, Rākhal's devotion ranks higher. Just see how he is smiling and talking.' And pointing towards Lātu he added, 'And how terribly angry he is! A real devotee — can he show anger before the Lord? Anger is Satanic. Anger makes love and devotion take wing.'

Lātu was cut to the quick. He shrivelled up like a leach thrown into lime. Hearing those words of the Master, he was seized simultaneously with shame and pique, and with pathetic eyes dropping tears, said 'I will never again show anger before you. Please excuse me this time.'

Seeing tears trickling down Lātu's cheeks, Master said, by way of consolation, 'You know, my boy, Rākhal is right. (Showing his body he said) This fellow (i.e. the individual called Ramakrishna) felt a desire for chewing betel. So it was possible for Rākhal to disobey. If the One that is inside that (viz. the Lord) felt like that Rākhal would not have the guts to say "no".' Anyway, Lātu was at last asked to prepare the betel-roll. We heard this story, from beginning to end, from Ramalāldādā.

Later on the remarks that Lātu Maharaj passed on this incident throws a flood of light on the insight of the Master. Said he, 'You know, Rākhal was to be our sovereign. So the Master would not ask Rākhal to do small chares.' Let us record in this connexion another incident in Rākhal's life. One day Rākhal was asked to anoint oil to the Master's body, Rakhal took the phial of oil in his hand all right. But something crossed his mind. All on a sudden he got down from the verandah and started walking away. We heard the Master say, 'You want to go? Let me see how you can.' Rākhal made for the gate straight, reached it, stopped as suddenly and ran back to him. Master asked, 'How now! Can you go away?' Rākhal started weeping.

* * *

Pratap Chandra Hazra hailed from a village adjacent to Sri Ramakrishna's native village, Kamarpukur, and was known to him. He came to Dakshineswar in 1882 and stayed there for a long time. He was a *sādhaka* too. But his ideas about religion were those of a common orthodox Hindu. According to him religion consisted of worship, counting beads, putting on marks of sandal paste on the forehead, and the like. And, one who does not do these cannot be called a religious man. Hazra found that the Master practised none of these. So one day he proceeded to give him advice gratis and said, 'Well Gadadhar, you should not conduct yourself that way. If you go on like that you will lose all respect people are showing you now. If not for anything else, at least to please people, you can take the rosary and like me count beads. So many people come to you, if they see you doing *japa* they will know you are doing something and are not a vagabond.'

The Master laughed out, and calling Lātu, Harish, Gopal, Ramalālā and others, said, 'Have you heard what Hazra says? He is asking me to count beads. But now I cannot do all these. He says if people do not see me observing these conventions they will cease respecting me. What do you say to that? Is he right?'

Hearing this the Master's attendants got wild. Harish said, 'Please don't pay any heed to his words. He comes from a village and his intellect smacks of rusticity.'

Master: 'Don't say like that. Who knows if Mother is not speaking through his mouth?'

Harish: 'What do you talk, Sir? As if Mother could not get a better man to convey Her message to You!'

Master: 'No, no, you don't know. Mother does teach man in that way.'

In this talk what struck Lātu most was 'Mother does teach in that way.' For in later days how often did we not hear him repeat *verbatim* this incident with emphasis on that sentence!

We would like to digress here a little to give an idea of what Lātu Maharaj thought about this queer personality that was Hazra. Lātu Maharaj used to say 'The angularities of Hazra were not rounded. While counting beads he would think of worldly affairs. On account of this, he could not make much progress. But he contracted Brother Naren's friendship and that gave him salvation. . . . After the Master's passing away he took it into his head that he was an Incarnation of God, even one greater than the Master. . . . One day it so happened that Hazra felt a desire to massage the Master's feet. When he proceeded to do it the Master withdrew his legs. He was piqued. He went out and sat with a long face. At last the Master called him in and allowed him to massage his feet. That was the only occasion when he served the Master. . . . One day Hazra had a strong desire to give religious instructions to people. Whoever came to Dakshineswar that day was called by him to sit down and hear his discourse. He said, "Ramakrishna is not in the garden. What do you gain by going to him? Come and sit down and listen to me." But what was strange not one sat near him. Only one wanted to sit. Him also the Master beckoned to come away. How deeply did Hazra feel it! . . . Hazra and brother Naren were chums, so to say. He prepared tobacco for Naren, and engaged himself in discussions with him. Brother Naren would say jokingly, "You are not an ordinary man, I see. You have reached the goal of life. I have seen very few people counting beads like you. And what a rosary you have? How big are the beads, how shining? I do not know of a greater man of realization than you." Hearing this he became all the more egotistic. He would say to us, "What would you understand of me? Your Naren is the only one who has understood me correctly. Even your Ramakrishna could not understand my greatness." Such was his egotism. This is how man falls from religious eminence. . . . Hazra used to repeat *Soham* and count beads. He was given to much argumentation. Hence the Master warned us against mixing too much with him. He would say, "He wants to preach views contradictory to ours. Don't go to him. Yours is the path of devotion, his of dry intellect. What would you do with that?" . . . One day Hazra danced during devotional singing. Naren made fun of that.'

(*To be continued*)

WORSHIP OF THE SUN

M. V. SRIDATTA SARMA

In the Hindu pantheon, the Sun (Sūrya or Āditya) is the most concrete of all gods. The term Sūrya is a derivative of '*swar*' or light indicating the orb of the Sun. In the mind of the Vedic seer, the Sun is always present as the luminary. While the Trinity (Brahma, Viṣṇu and Śiva) are merely hinted by verbal testimony and are agreeable to the ear, this Lord, the destroyer of darkness is always remembered as being perceptible to the eyes.

> '*sabdamātrā śrutisukhā brahma viṣṇu śivādayaḥ*
> *pratyakṣo ayam smṛtādeva sūryastimiranāśanaḥ*
> (*Bhaviṣya Puraṇa* : LXV-61).

He is the Reality whose colours are at different stages reflected in the waters, being observed by all beings, not to speak of the cowherds, buffaloes, etc. (*Utainam gopā adṛsannadṛsannudahāryaḥ* : Hymn to Rudra). He is the witness and the spy, who always watches all beings, as also their deeds both good and bad. Being the witness of all actions of beings, He neither participates in those deeds, nor enjoys the fruits thereof. (*sarveṣām sākṣibhooto asau na karoti na lipyaté*). Hence, the appellation *viśvasākṣi*[1] or *karmasākṣi*.[2] He is the Spirit of the Universe (*sūrya ātmā jagatastastuṣaśca*). This Āditya is the Supreme Spirit (*asāvādityo brahma*).

He pervades the eyes of all beings (*Adityas cakṣur bhootvākṣiṇi prāviśat*). In Vedic cosmogony, Sūrya is represented as the eye of the cosmic Puruṣa (*Cakṣussūryo ajāyata*). In *Akṣyupaniṣad*, mention is made of the *Cākṣuṣmatī Vidyā*, a knowledge which enables one to attain the faculty of insight into the Truth or Reality. The venerable Sānkṛti, who conducted the *upāsana* of Sūrya was able to enter into the solar regions. The members of the family of a person, who practise this Vidyā will be immune from blindness. They will not only overstep the darkness of Avidyā, but also attain that state of bliss which is free from stains. This Lord is replete with intelligence (*Prajñāna ghana*). So, he is offered supplications for a gift, viz.: the faculty of perception extending into the subtleness of the knowledge of Brahman (Cf. *Suryopaniṣad*: *cakṣurno devaḥ savitā cakṣurna uta parvataḥ. cakṣurdhātā dadhātu naḥ*). His body extends over unlimited space and time (being omniscient and omnipresent). So, in one hymn of the Upaniṣad, the aspirant cherishes the desire that he may be lifted up to that state of absorption into the Supreme Spirit (*savitā no rāsatām dirghamāyuḥ*).

In his Yoga Aphorisms Patañjali says 'By making Samyama on the Sun, comes the knowledge of the worlds.' (*bhuvana jñānam sūryé samyamāt*. III-27). Sūrya is the elite among the luminaries (*jyotiṣām jyotiḥ*). Jyoti or splendour is His substratum (*Sūryé jyotiḥ, jyotih sūryaḥ*). This Splendour is eternal (*Akṣayya tejas*). One, who takes up to meditation on Him attains the Jyotiṣmatī Vidyā (faculty of exceptional insight or clairvoyance).

According to the Puranic accounts, Sūrya is styled Āditya (the son of Aditi). The Vedic texts are replete with references to the different aspects or manifestations of the Sun. In some passages of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, only eight Ādityas are mentioned, while in some others, the number rises up to twelve, in which case they represent the twelve months of the year.

> '*dhātā mitro'ryamo rudro varuṇaḥ sūrya eva ca.*
> *bhago vivasvān pūṣā ca savitā dasamaḥ smṛtaḥ.*
> *ekādaśastathā tvaṣṭā viṣṇurdvādaśa ucyate.*'

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[1] The witness of the universe.

[2] The witness of action.

Dhāta, mitra, aryama, rudra, varuṇa, sūrya. bhaga, vivasvān, Pūṣā and *Śavitā* are the ten Ādityas. Tvaṣṭa is the eleventh, while the twelfth Āditya is called Viṣṇu. These are the twelve manifestations of the Sun otherwise styled Dvādaśātmās. Of these Ādityas, Viṣṇu is the most prominent (Cf. *ādityānām aham viṣṇurjyotiṣām raviramśumān.* — Among the Ādityas, I am Viṣṇu, while among the luminaries, I am Ravi. — *Bhagavadgītā* : X-21). This Viṣṇu is known to be both with and without attributes. He has to be realized only by knowledge (*saguṇo nirguṇo viṣṇurjñāna gamyo hyasau smṛtaḥ*).

Mitra or the friend is a great Āditya, who marshals men and watches the tillers with the unwinking eye (*Mitro janān yātayati bruvāṇo*). He is described as possessing three eyes. He is the resplendent and also the cause of all (*Namo mitrāya bhānave mṛtyurme pāhi*).

Savitri is the inspirer and quickener of thought, who is capable of bestowing the wishes of aspirants (Cf. : *savitri kāmānām yadi jagati jāgṛtirbhavati* : *Gangālahari*). The famous Savitri hymn otherwise known as the golden text of the Ṛgveda and which forms part of the morning and evening prayers (*Sandhyā*) is addressed to Savitri. He is invoked for stimulating the spiritual power in man. This is otherwise known as Sāvitri Vidyā. This is the mystical knowledge, which should be practised in secret without being divulged. (*Sa eṣām sāvitrīm na kincidapi na kasmaiścit praśamsayet*).

Pūṣā represents the phenomenal nature in the form of the dazzling morning light with its golden hue. In one of the hymns, he is described as crossing the seas in a boat while on his journey to the skies. He is the destroyer of all sins. This graceful Puṣan's form is the most blessed one. The Upaniṣadic seers aspire for communion with Him (*Tejo yat té roopam kalyāṇatamam. Tat té paśyāmi yo asāvasau puruṣaḥ so aham asmi.—Īśāvāsya Upaniṣad.*) Rudra is a prominent Āditya. Sūrya is the Hamsa (the Absolute), who manifests in the heavenly light ; He is the visitor of the mid-region, as also the sacrificial altar ; He is the guest in all homes ; He penetrates into water and rises up in the infinite sky as also the mountains. These twelve Ādityas are supposed to shine at the time of the dissolution of the Universe (Cf. : *Dagdham viśvam dahana kiranairnoditā dvādaśārka* — *Venī Samhāra Nātaka* : III-6). Says Yudhistira in a prayer to the Sun thus : 'When the time for the dissolution of the world approaches, the fire of destruction emanating from Your irate temperament will completely reduce the three worlds into ashes.' (*Mahābhārata*).

> '*samhārakālé samprāpté tava krodha*
> *vinissṛtaḥ.*
> *samvartakāgnis trailokyam bhasmikṛtya*
> *avatiṣṭhati.*'

In chapter LII of the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* is given a graphic account of the movements of the Sun in His chariot yoked with the seven steeds. Sūrya's charioteer is Aruna (Aurora Borealis). His wives are Chāya (shadow) and Samjña (Consciousness or Intellect). The Chariot known as Makara Dhvaja is provided with one wheel (perhaps to indicate Kāla or eternal Time) moving in the space of eternal Time (aeons). The seven bays move in the aerial path and they symbolise the seven metres : Gāyatri, Triṣṭup, Jagati, Anuṣṭup, Pankti, Bṛhati and Uṣnik (the metrical parts of the Vedas). The three naves of the vehicle constitute the phases of Time : morning, afternoon, evening ; or past, present and future (Trikāla). They also indicate the three Vedas (Rik, Yajus and Sāman). The Trinity are also indicated (*Udayé brahmaroopaśca madhyāhné tu maheśvaraḥ. Astamāne svayam viṣṇus trayeemurtir divākaraḥ*). The wheel is fitted with five spokes (the five seasons). The felly has six bindings in the form of six seasons : *vasanta, grīṣma, varṣa, śarat, hemanta* and *śiśira*). The platform on the carriage has two sides to indicate the Sun's passage, northern and southern (or the equinoctial and solstitial points). The arrows consist of moments (instants or *muhūrtas*) with divisions of time variously computed. The axle rod is the *kṣaṇa* (0·8 second). The felly of the wheel is provided with eight bindings to denote the eight quarters. The Sun streams forth in this vehicle fitted with the steering rod of the three constituents (*sattva, rajas* and *tamas*). In the nights, His banner indicating Dharma is hung up prominently. Like the potter's wheel, the disc of the Sun moves in all directions (*Kulāla cakravadyāti maṇḍalam sarvato diśam — Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* : Ch. LII).

Wickedness is always associated with darkness and other evils. Being seated in the refulgent car of order, Sūrya chases away all wickedness. To all the beings of the Universe, the Sun and the Moon set up examples as always following the eternal path of righteousness and moral order. They instil in every one the sense of duty. So, the Vedic seer declares : '*Svasti panthām anucarema sūryācandram asāviva.*' (Let all of us follow the path of righteousness like the Sun and the Moon.) The conception is that by the presence of the Sun and Moon all evils (the dark powers) are defeated. So, the immortal poet Kālidāsa puts forth his query thus : 'When the Sun sends forth his rays even to a concealed area, how could there be darkness and the evils associated with it in the world ?' (*Sūryé tapati āvaranāya dṛṣteh kalpeta lokasya katham tamisrā — Raghuvamsa* V-13).

The Upaniṣads declare that the seekers after the Ātman by dint of their austerities, continence, faith and spiritual studies enter into the realm of the Sun by the northern course (*athottareṇa tapasā brahmacaryeṇa sraddhayā vidyayā ātmānam anviṣya ādityaṃ abhijayanté. — Praśna Up.* 1-10). The *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* says : 'They, who practise austerity and faith in the forest, depart passionless through the Path of the Sun to the zone where there is the Immortal Puruṣa, that Imperishable Being.'[3]

The Sun is the root cause of all the thr worlds. The oblations poured into the sacrificial fire are received by Him. By Him a showered rains. He is the sole director o all movements of the world. From rai grow food which in turn cause the springi up of life. The Sun is thus the projecto maintainer, as also the destroyer of li Hence, He becomes the subject of meditati to all those who are in quest of the high end.

'*sūrya eṣu trilokeṣu kasya moolam*
paramadaivata
agnau prāstāhutis samyag ādityam
upatiṣṭha
ādityājjāyate vṛṣṭiḥ vṛṣterannam tataḥ
prajā
sūryātprasūyate sarvam tatra caiva
pratiya
bhāvābhāvā hi lokānām ādityān nisp
p
etattu dhyāninām dhyānam mokṣam
cāpyeṣa mokṣiṇ
(*Manu Smṛ*

Sūryopāsana is conducted in the form namaskāra (prostrations) which is stated be very much liked by the Sun (*namask priyo bhānuḥ*). This form of exercise conducted in the open ground facing the S at sunrise and the devotee prays Him f health and longevity (*ārogyam bhāska icchet*). The namaskara provides amp opportunities for exercise for all the limb besides allowing scope for the spread of t violet rays. The performer will have a co plete sun bath, when all evils are checked o At the time of the salutations, the devo prays for a cure of the diseases. (*hṛdrog mama sūrya harimāṇam ca nāśaya.* Oh Sūr destroy this malady of the heart in me as al the sins.) The worship of the Sun is ge rally conducted on Sundays (the day favour to Him), on days when He changes H mansion (*sankramaṇa*), the solstice, *equin* and the days of eclipse. It is said that t worship of the Sun during Māgha would efficacious.

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[3] तप: श्रद्धे ये ह्युपवसन्त्यरण्ये
शान्ता विद्वांसो भैक्ष्यचर्यां चरन्त: ।
सूर्यद्वारेण ते विरजा: प्रयान्ति
यत्रामृत: स पुरुषो ह्यव्ययात्मा ॥ I ii. 11.

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The seventh day in the bright half of the lunar month Magha is known as Ratha Saptami and this day is held sacred to the Sun. An image of Sūrya (couchant or standing) with two hands holding the padma flowers and placed on a lotus seat or the figure of Narayana placed in the orbit of a circular disc is placed on a chariot. (*dhyeyas sadā savitṛ maṇḍala madhyavartī nārāyanas sarasijāsana sanniviṣṭhaḥ*). The seven bays of Sūrya are also drawn in front of the vehicle with the lame Aruna as charioteer. This kind of image is placed on a wooden Ratha and drawn in every town or village at dawn accompanied by temple music, gongs, cymbals, chanting of hymns and psalms in praise of the Lord with due offerings. A person who takes part in this form of worship on the day of the Rathasaptami is sure to acquire merit and Lord Sūrya's blessings — says the Bhavishya Purana. It is said that the devotee rises up to the zone of the Sun in a Vimāna. (*sa yātyarka savarṇena vimānenārkamaṇḍalam*). Those who conduct the Rathayatra of the Sun will not only be free from diseases, but also acquire fortune.

> '*rogānschinnatti duschedyān durjayān*
> *jayate hyarīn.*
> *arthān prāpnoti duṣprāpān yah kuryat*
> *nāmasaptamīm.*'
> (*Bhavishya Purana*).

Sri Rama at the time of vanquishing the ten-headed dragon Ravana was imparted with the secrets relating to the worship of the Sun by the sage Agastya. The sage addresses Sri Rama thus :

> '*enamāpatsu kṛcchreṣu kāntāreṣu*
> *bhayeṣu ca.*
> *kīrtayan puruṣah kascinnāvasīdati*
> *rāghava.*
> *pūjayasva enamekāgro devadevam*
> *jagatpatim.*
> *etat triguṇitam japtvā yuddheṣu*
> *vijayiṣyasi.*'
> (*Valmīki Rāmāyaṇa* : *Yuddha Kaṇḍa*, 107. 25-26).

'Oh descendent of the race of the Raghus, by reciting the hymn in praise of this Sun in calamities and difficulties and while in the solitary woods as also when afflicted with fear, one does not meet with any trouble. Offer your prayers with due meditation to this God of gods, who is the Lord of the Universe ; by a recital of this hymn thrice, you will attain victory in encounters.'

PERSONALITIES IN THE LIFE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

(*Continued from Page* 96)

Sharat Chandra Gupta. He was 'a remarkable character, a Bengalee who had been reared amongst the Mohammedans of Jaunpur and who spoke Hindi and Urdu with more fluency than his mother tongue'. Sharat was attracted towards this young Sannyasin. He took him to his quarters and fed him. Swamiji stayed on at Hathras for a few days at an old acquaintance of his, where Sharat was a constant visitor. Thus developed an intimate contact which culminated in Sharat's renouncing the world. He accompanied Swamiji up to Hardwar and later joined the Baranagore Monastery and became Swami Sadānanda.

Sri Guru Charan Laskar : In February 1891 Swamiji reached Alwar. 'Walking along the public road' he arrived at the State Dispensary where Sri Guru Charan Laskar, a Bengali, was the physician in charge. 'Swamiji inquired of him in Bengali if there was a place where sannyasins could put up.' The doctor who was impressed by his appearance, not only arranged for his stay but spoke of him to everyone he met as 'a great monk'. Thus Swamiji soon came to be known to all at Alwar.

MESSAGE OF THE BUDDHA

BR. ATMA CHAITANYA

Remembrance of the Holy purifies our hearts. In the words of Sri Ramakrishna, 'Even as the sight of a lawyer stirs up the thought of a law-court, the sight of a holy man brings to our mind the thought of God, the supreme goal of human life.' We remember our lost glory as it were, we are reminded of our spiritual goal, and we get an acceleration along the path to perfection by reading and reflecting on the life of these holy personalities. The Buddha belongs to one of the greatest of the Holies the world has seen. In the words of Swami Vivekananda 'He was God incarnate, the greatest, the boldest preacher of morality that the world ever saw, the greatest Karmayogi.... He rejected even the language of the gods to speak in the language of the people, so that he might reach the hearts of the people ; he gave up a throne to live with beggars, and the poor, and the downcast ; he pressed the pariah to his breast like a second Rama.'

Since the time man has been conscious of his body, he has been conscious of his spirit too. His knowledge of bondage has always been followed by a feeling of freedom. Never has he imagined death or annihilation without at the same time imagining a deathless immortal state. Personalities like the Buddha were, as it were, the messengers from this abode of Eternity and Deathlessness. They brought to the shores of the world the happy news of an Eternal Life and Bliss. They were really the persons who came, in the words of the poet, as the 'trailing clouds of glory'.

Siddharta, as the Buddha was called as a child, was born nearly 560 years before Christ on the Indian scene. India was at that time a victim to the round of mere rituals, the dry bones of religion that depleted one's energy and time, but resulted in no improvement of the individual's mental, moral or spiritual content. Head held sway over the heart. Character, selflessness and love were at discount. Masses were, as it were, made co of this mechanical wheel of observanc Young Siddhartha was in contrast, all lo all compassion and sharp of intellect a questioning everything before accepting. H would always try to save and succour, be a bird or a beast or any being in need. H grew up as a Prince of astounding accomplishments, of body, head and heart. He w wedded to an equally noble soul, Gopā o Yaśodhara, of immaculate purity and u surpassed beauty. He begot a son Rahul whom Siddhartha's father thought would b the cord to bind Siddhartha to his home a kingdom. But it turned out to be otherwi Siddhartha, full of youth and energy w matchless powers of introspection and analy came across the poignant scenes of li disease, old age and death. These sce threw him, as it were, into the depths of co templation. He pondered : 'Is this all t end of life that apparently looks so full o meaning and joy ? Does not this prove th paths of glory, pomp of power, all that beau all that wealth ever gave, awaits alike th inevitable hour ? The longest happiness cou not endure beyond death, even as the longe misery. Death took away all the charm o life — of youth, wealth, glory and all. I there no escape from this terrible death a is there no path that may lead to Eternal Li and Bliss ? If yes, that should be the o worthwhile quest of human life. If no, ever thing was futile, life was not worth a f thing....'

Thus the youth Siddhartha decided t launch on the Road to Eternal Life. H decided to stake all that was his for the attai ment of this goal. He gave up his kingdo his wife, and wealth and everything a wandered away into the wilderness of lone ness. He went to many an acclaimed lea of spiritual life. Everywhere he found nothing but mere bones of religion, the mechanical observances of a fast or a ritual or an austerity and so on. The peace is of the mind and heart; knowledge is of the mind and heart and how could these processes that did neither improve the mental clarity nor the compassion and love of the heart give peace or Enlightenment? Thus, after the experience of long wanderings and discipleships under various preceptors, he came to the conclusion that the truth could be and should be got by diving within oneself. Now he sat under the famous bodhi tree at 'Bodhgaya' on the banks of the Niranjana river with the famous determination:

ईहासने शुष्यतु मे शरीरम्
त्वगस्थि मांसं प्रलयश्च यातु ।
अप्राप्य बोधिं बहुकल्पदुर्लभाम्
नैवासनात्कायमतश्चलिष्यति ॥

> 'Let the body dry up, let the skin, muscles and bones perish, still it shall not move from the seat until I have attained to that wealth of Enlightenment, which is unattainable even after several aeons.'

All powers of his mind were forced and focussed by this gigantic act of will, this determination to pierce through the veil of untruth. The spirit dauntlessly rose above layer after layer of the body, mind, ego, subconscious, conscious and super-conscious and Illumination flashed at last like lightning driving the darkness of a million years to nothingness — and Siddhartha became the Buddha, the Enlightened One. He became aware, nay, he came face to face with Nirvana, the Truth of life. He saw that the root of all misery was *Tanha*, the unquenchable thirst for sensual pleasure. Man was not a combination of body, senses etc. to revel in them. He was beyond all of them and so had nothing to do with them. Man should destroy his self (meaning the limited, lower self) to attain to Nirvana, the Eternal Life and Bliss. Here we notice the Buddha repeating as it were the words of the Upaniṣdic seer whose watchword is to destroy the Jīvatva, the lower-self to attain Brahmatva, the supreme Self. Vedic statements were perhaps so much stretched and perverted to favour ritualism, that Buddha meticulously avoided the use of their terms and definitions even. His was a religion of reform. He preached spiritual in place of the ritual. That is why perhaps we do not find him using the word Mukti, Mokṣa, Brahman, Ātman etc. though they would have signified all that he meant by Nirvana.

With such a knowledge of the Supreme state, he went out preaching for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many. He chose to speak to them in their own language, Pāli. He spoke to them in simple and straight language, spicing his teaching with parables. People could not help recognizing his messiahship, for his very gait radiated the glory of Enlightenment, his words drove conviction to their hearts. 'He spoke not as the Scribes but as with authority.'

His following increased very rapidly which included the rulers of many a state and men of all classes and creeds. He was a reformer, the like of which the world had yet to see. He did not hurt any one, did not condemn any one, but like the gentle dew that makes the flowers bloom, changed the whole pattern of Hindu society by his love and compassion. He gave equal opportunities for all castes to embrace spiritual life, both as lay and as monastic members. This was the spirit of Hinduism which recognized caste only on merits and not by heredity and the Buddha put the same into practice. Similar was his answer to the question of women. His own foster-mother, Prajapati, and his beloved wife, Gopā, wanted to embrace monastic life under his discipleship. Revered Ananda, Buddha's beloved disciple and attendant, asked the question 'Are women capable of embracing monastic life and attaining to Nirvana, my Lord?' 'Why not, Ananda?' was the Master's reply, 'See, what a great thing a woman like Prajapati, did to the world by bringing up the Buddha!' Even here he was following the true Hindu religion that gave freedom of spiritual life to all, irrespective of caste, creed or sex. He had relished the nectar of selfless and contemplative life. He had experienced the joy of dedicated service and the ineffable peace that it induced. Hence he invited all to partake of this bliss. When his son, Rahula, a mere boy, came to him and asked (as he was instructed by his mother) 'father, give me my inheritance', Buddha gave him the highest he had to offer, 'A sannyasin's garb'.

'Practice, not prattle' was the essence of his exhortations to seekers after perfection. Two scholars came to him and asked 'Sir, he says that Pokkharasati's way alone leads to Brahman; but I say that Tarukkha's way alone is true. Sir, please give us your decision'. Then Buddha, in his inimitable way questioned them: 'Has Pokkharasati seen Brahman, or Tarukkha? Have their fathers? Their grandfathers?' Receiving a negative reply all through, he told them 'Is it not futile and foolish to argue about a thing of which none knows anything. Suppose you built a staircase for a building which you never saw and never heard, would that not be sheer foolishness?'

Mere prayers, divorced of sincere effort, had not much efficacy. Diligent practice was the thing required. Buddha once asked a visitor, 'Suppose you want to reach the other shore. If you simply sit on this bank of the river and go on praying for the other bank to come to you, will you reach the other bank?' The visitor replied 'No'. 'Then, if this bank, hardly half-a-mile distant, does not condescend to come to you by mere prayer, how can the Svargaloka, Brahmaloka and so on, so far off, be expected to come to you by mere prayer?'

All goodness was welcome, but goodness always did not mean passivity. See the bold proclamation of the Blessed One 'He (the Buddha) does not teach that those who go to war in a righteous cause are blameworthy. The Buddha teaches complete surrender (of selfish life) to self but does not teach a surrender of anything to those powers that are evil, be they men or gods or elements of nature. Struggle must be, for all life is a struggle of some kind'. 'He who deserves punishment should be punished, and he who is worthy of favour must be favoured'.

Each one belongs to his own leniage of mental and spiritual evolution. Heredity cannot account for the genius of man. The Buddha was once begging in the streets of Kapilavastu, his home town. His father, the king, objected to this and asked why he did not come and get all the food for his whole following from him. The Buddha replied 'I have done as many predecessors did'. 'Why, for truth, none in our family ever begged, as we have been a dynasty of rulers only', the king questioned. The Buddha replied 'You might, Sir, belong to the dynasty of kings, but I belong to the dynasty of Buddhas and the Buddhas always begged'.

Buddha preached the inexorability of the fruits of one's action, that the good actions begot good results and the bad, bad. Buddhas are the outcome of their innumerable good actions through countless births. Self-effort was the *sine qua non* of spiritual progress. Dependence on anything, be it even on God was undesirable. To quote his own words—

'Seeking the way ye must exert yourself and strive with diligence. It is not enough to have seen me. . . . A sick man may be cured by the healing power of the medicine alone and will be rid of all his ailments even without beholding the physician.' 'He who does not do what I command, sees me in vain. He who lives far off and yet walks righteously is ever with me.' His last uttered words were again an exhortation to work and diligence, to cross over from death to Immortality. 'Decay is inherent in all component things' he said. 'But the truth will remain for ever. . . . Work out your salvation with diligence.' These were the last words of the Buddha. This also is the last word of India's message to the world. . . .

'This world is fleeting; its purpose is only to prepare man for a higher mental and spiritual life. . . . Hence stop building for yourself homes and empires here and from waging wars with each other. Build your kingdom on Truth, on the Spirit, which shall be yours for Eternity. March from untruth to Truth, darkness to Light and from death to Immortality.'

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA AND RAMAKRISHNA-VEDANTA MOVEMENT IN THE SOUTH

Br. MADHAVAN

Swami Ramakrishnanandaji Maharaj, the founder-president of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in Madras, is an unforgettable power to all associates of the Ramakrishna Order. A direct disciple of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Ramakrishnananda was one of the main pillars of the Movement. Born in 1863, the year of Swami Vivekananda's birth, the birth Centenary of this saint falls on 19th of this month.

Sri Ramakrishna was a dynamic spiritual power, who, as the French savant Romain Rolland puts it, 'was the consummation of two thousand years of spiritual life of three hundred million people.' His disciples were the conduits carrying the ambrosia of his realizations to whet the spiritual appetite of the twentieth century world. Of these conduits, the one that extended to enrich the South was Swami Ramakrishnananda.

Born as the eldest son of an orthodox Tantric *sādhaka*, Īśwarchandra Bapuli of Mayal Icchapur in Hoogly district, Śashibhushan (pre-monastic name of Ramakrishnananda) was brought up in an intense atmosphere of orthodoxy. Though a Śākta by birth, his temperament was Vaishnavistic. Influenced by the life and teachings of Sri Gouranga, he ever remained a strict vegetarian. Complete self-surrender and service to his Guru were the dominant notes of his spiritual life. His teachings: 'When man asserts himself in man, he commits all sorts of atrocities. When God asserts Himself in man, he becomes good, pure and virtuous', etc., resplendently bring out his above-mentioned religious attitude. Though he was a Bhakta, he maintained an attitude of reverence towards the paths of Jnana, Karma and Yoga; nay, the principles of each one of these practices found their fulfilment in him. 'Salvation' he said, 'does not consist in going to heaven. It is in the realization that "I am God's child" if you are a Viśiṣṭādvaitin, or "I am one with God" if you are an Advaitin. Both are one and the same.'

Highly religious by temperament, his soul yearned for God even from childhood and this hunger of his soul was appeased by contact with Sri Ramakrishna in 1883. At the very first sight, both the Master and the disciple understood each other and were bound by an unbroken cord of love. Śashi surrendered completely at the Master's feet. Speaking about it, Sri Ramachandra Dutt, a householder disciple of the Master, said: 'All those who approached Sri Ramakrishna Deva had some ulterior motive or other. They asked, "How shall I be saved?" or "How shall I progress in spiritual life?" But, Śashi had no such motive whatsoever. He surrendered his humble self completely to the Master and learnt the religion of selfless service from him. Practice of that religion in full made him blessed beyond compare!' Years rolled on in the delightful company of the Master.

But, when the news of his Guru's illness reached him, Śashi left his studies and rushed to serve him. So unprecedented were his devotion and service to the Guru that after Sri Ramakrishna's Mahasamadhi, when the young disciples took Sannyas, Swami Vivekananda gave him the name 'Ramakrishnananda' in recognition of this devotion.

The disciples of Sri Ramakrishna gathered in a rented house at Baranagore where Swami Ramakrishnananda devoted his heart and soul to the unswerving vigil over his Master's relics and to the service of his brother-disciples. To support the Math during its hard days, this Sannyasin even worked as a teacher in a High School for some months. Referring to this Swami Vivekananda remarked : 'Oh ! what a steadfastness to the Ideal did we ever find in Śashi ! He was a Mother to us. . . . We used to get up at 3 o'clock in the morning. Then all of us would go to the Worship room and be lost in Japa and meditation. There were times when the meditation lasted up to 4 or 5 o'clock in the afternoon. Śashi would be waiting with our food ; if necessary, he would by sheer force drag us out of our meditation. Who cared then if the world existed or not ! '

After a time, when the young sannyasins were caught in the *'wanderlust'* inherent in the sannyasins, it was the resolve of Swami Ramakrishnananda to stick to the worship of the Master's relics. To him, the worship of his Master's relics was more ennobling and edifying than any pilgrimage. It was the presence of their beloved brother Śashi at the Math that induced the brothers to return wherever they wandered—thus were they knit into an organization. Swami Vivekananda once remarked, 'Without Śashi life in the monastery would have been impossible.'

When Swami Vivekananda returned from the West, some earnest disciples and admirers in Madras requested him to start a spiritual centre here, the immediate figure, that flashed across his mind, to lead the movement in the South was that of Swami Ramakrishnananda. For, he knew that if orthodoxy in religion was the ornament of the South, Swami Ramakrishnananda was an ornament to orthodoxy itself. So, he said, 'I shall send you one, who is more orthodox than the most orthodox men of the South and who is at the same time unique and unsurpassed in his worship and meditation of God.' Besides this Swamiji had confidence in his executive capacity.

At Swami Vivekananda's bidding, Ramakrishnananda, though earlier he had never gone even to Calcutta for fear of breaking the vigil over his heart's treasure — the relics of his Guru — readily consented to go to Madras. He arrived in Madras in March 1897 with only a photograph of Sri Ramakrishna as his treasure.

His work in Madras and elsewhere

In Madras, the Swami was first accommodated in a rented house called 'Flora Cottage' from where he shifted to the Ice House on the Beach Road, which had been sanctified by the stay of his venerable brother, Swami Vivekananda. Here, as in Baranagore Math, the Shrine of the Master was the pivot round which his activities revolved. His worship was a sight for the gods to see. The devotees who gathered at the Math during these worships were charmed beyond measure by the devotion of the Swami and imbibed love of God in themselves.

On the demise of Sri Biligiri Iyengar, the owner of the Ice House, the building was auctioned and the Swami had to shift to a small outhouse in the compound till he succeeded in collecting money and building a house for the Math on the Brodies Road, Mylapore in 1907. Unfortunately this small building cracked and was declared unsafe for habitation. Swami Ramakrishnananda had to suffer much on account of this. It was as a result of his untiring *tapasya* that his successors completed the construction of the present building in 1917.

At the outset the Swami had to face extreme odds to keep the ball rolling. For pecuniary considerations he had to be his own cook and servant and at the same time carry on the Vedanta work through lectures, classes etc. in different parts of the City. There were occasions when he had to walk long distances on foot to take classes and conduct discourses. But all these hardships he bore with a composure and courage possible to him alone! Having merged his little self with that of the Lord, he faced them all with submission. He remarked, 'If with a heart full of renunciation, you go on working, then you will not fall into misery. If you wish to work in the world, this is the only method which when followed is able to cut the fetters of your Karma.' If none of the students turned up for his class, he would remain there throughout the stipulated time and read the lessons to himself. If questioned, he would say, 'I have come here to educate myself!' His illuminating classes and lectures soon became popular. Eminent citizens of Madras who were students then, speak even today with awe and reverence about their contact with the Swami. The Swami was a strict disciplinarian too. Sister Devamata writes in her book *Days in an Indian Monastery* thus: 'Swami Ramakrishnananda did not let any one forget the sanctity of the monastery. More than once when a thoughtless visitor took out his daily paper and began to read, I heard the Swami say to him, "Put away your paper. You can read it anywhere. When you have come here, you should think of God."'

The Swami was a zealous missionary. He extended his lectures and classes to Mylapore, Triplicane, Chintadripet, and Mint in the City; Vaniambadi, Arasampatti, Krishnagiri, Barur, Tinnevelly, Dharmapuri and Masulipatam etc., outside Madras. He formed Vivekananda Societies at some places to carry on the Vedanta work permanently.

The orphanage known as the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home in Mylapore started by Swami Ramakrishnananda in February 1905 stands today as a monument of the Swami's compassion towards suffering humanity!

Apart from the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in Madras, many Centres of the Ramakrishna Order in South India, Ceylon, Rangoon and Malaya owe their existence to Swami Ramakrishnananda's efforts.

He wrote many books in English as well as in Bengali. His *Life of Ramanuja* in Bengali helped to popularize the Acharya's life in the North.

His work would, he thought be incomplete if he did not succeed in bringing the Holy Mother and Sri Sri Maharaj — Srimat Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj — to the South. This great ambition of his was fulfilled by 1911. He took all possible pain and made enormous sacrifices like an humble devotee to make the Holy Mother and Sri Sri Maharaj quite comfortable in the South. But all this ceaseless activity told upon his robust physique and he was attacked by galloping phthisis to which he succumbed in August 1911.

His life was a shining example of Guru-bhakti and complete dedication and sacrifice at the altar of humanity and service to the Lord! He was a living commentary to the Mission's motto: *'Atmano mokṣartham jagaddhitaya ca'*; for the liberation of one's own self and the welfare of the world!

The permanent seat of the ego is the heart. But it is tied to the three lower centres of the body, and as such has completely forgotten its true home. Thus tied down, it can only stay in the external portion of the body with which it fully identifies itself. In this way it sometimes becomes happy and sometimes unhappy, sometimes conscious and sometimes unconscious, sometimes pure, good, honest, calm, hopeful, loving, sweet and kind, and sometimes impure, bad, dishonest, restless, hasty, harsh and unkind. It cannot be always happy, pure and good, although it may have a desire to be so. The only course left to it, if it wants to be permanently happy, pure and good, is to go beyond these pairs.

— SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND HIS TEACHINGS

V. SIVASUPRAMANIAM

Although a hundred years have gone by since the day Swami Vivekananda was born and over sixty years have passed since his attainment of samadhi, he is still a living force and there can be no doubt that he will continue to be so in ever-increasing measure until time shall be no more. As years pass, we see more and more persons animated by his ideals. What was the secret of the hold that he had over his contemporaries and continues to have over succeeding generations?

As a man, he had a love and tenderness towards all things and a deep overmastering desire to make the whole world participate in the life of the spirit and its perfect bliss. He was wonderfully versatile, was an orator of the highest type and a master of many languages.

'Whenever virtue subsides and vice prevails I come down to help mankind' declared Lord Krishna to Arjuna on the battle field of Kurukshetra. It was at a period when the winds of materialism from the West were sweeping across the Indian sub-continent and spiritual values were declining, that there appeared on the scene the Saint of Dakshineswar, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, an unlettered man, in the formal sense, but who was a living embodiment of Godliness and whom Romain Rolland described as the 'fulfilment of the spiritual aspirations of 300 million Hindus for a period of 2000 years.' Swami Vivekananda was his chosen vehicle for the spread of his message. The Master once said that he was overwhelmed by the presence of his disciple.

Narendranath Dutt, as he then was, first met the Master when he was about 18 years of age. It is said that at the first interview Sri Ramakrishna asked him if he could sing religious songs. He said 'yes' and sang two or three songs, in his glorious voice. Sri Ramakrishna was so moved that he sat for some time rapt in ecstatic contemplation of God.

Narendra was at first a sceptic. He doubted the existence of God. He himself tells us how in the early days of their acquaintance, he asked Sri Ramakrishna, 'Have you seen God?' and the reply he received was 'I see Him just as I see you here, only in a much intenser sense'. The yearning, restless spirit of the young man was at last satisfied.

His religious belief may be summed up, in the words of Dr Brajendra Nath Seal as 'the creed of the universal man and the absolute and inalienable sovereignty of the Self'. It was in fact, a combination of the two ancient Hindu doctrines of Jñāna and Bhakti, or in the Western sense, it was a combination of an absolute monism which affirms that All is one, and at the same time of a devout approach to a God who can be worshipped.

An ancient hymn said : 'As different rivers, taking their start from different mountains, running crooked or straight, all come and mingle their waters in the ocean, so the different sects with their different points of view, at last all come to Thee, O Lord.'

To proclaim and make clear the fundamental unity underlying all religions, as expressed in that hymn, was the mission of Sri Ramakrishna, which was spread to the world by Swami Vivekananda. The theme of his message was the wonderful truth that the religions of the world are not contradictory nor antagonistic; that they are but various phases of one Eternal Religion.

According to him, Religion meant the Realization of God, feeling God, seeing God, talking to God. He said : 'Religion is a reality to be felt, to be sensed in an infinitely more intense way than we can sense the world.'

'Religion is not talk, or doctrines or theories; nor is it sectarianism. Religion cannot live in sects and societies. It is the relation between the soul and God. How can it be made into a society?' 'Religion does not consist in erecting temples or building churches, or attending public worship. It is not to be found in books, or in words, or in lectures or in organizations. Religion consists in realization.'

He said on another occasion : 'I accept all religions that were in the past, and worship them all — I accept, not tolerate, to say "tolerate" would be an insult and a blasphemy.'

The two ideals that he found in the religion of Realization were first, renunciation and second, unity of all religions.

Soon after Sri Ramakrishna attained Mahāsamādhi, Vivekananda, along with the other disciples of the Master, constituted themselves under his leadership into an order of Sannyasins — men who have renounced the world — and dedicated themselves to the spread of the Master's message and to the service of mankind, without distinction of race, caste or creed. The seed that was sown by them — the Ramakrishna Mission — has grown into a mighty tree which has spread its branches to the four quarters of the globe and under its shade millions of men and women have found comfort and shelter.

It was at the Parliament of Religions held at Chicago in 1893 that Swami Vivekananda dazzled the West by the brilliance both of his message and his personality.

He went there as an unknown man, arousing perhaps, some curiosity, in his robe of red and his great yellow turban. But his opening speech brought him instantaneous fame and he became at once the central figure in the Parliament. His epoch making paper on Hinduism was received with a storm of applause. One of the leading newspapers of New York wrote : 'After hearing him, we feel how foolish it is to send missionaries to this learned nation'.

He set himself the task of harmonizing the thought currents of the East and the West. To the West his special message was that materialism can never permanently satisfy the soul of man ; that there is a nobler quest than the accumulation of wealth or the acquisition of an extensive empire ; that religion and science are in essential harmony and that man can best achieve the object of his existence only by living a spiritual life. He emphasized again and again the unity of all religions.

On his return to India from the West, Swami Vivekananda was appalled by the apathy of the people and the poverty and degradation he saw everywhere. He decided to awaken the manhood of his people. He saw the need for a recreated vitality in a nation that had been drained of its vigour through the centuries.

'I do not believe', he wrote, 'in a God or religion that cannot wipe the widow's tears or bring a piece of bread to the orphan's mouth.' He turned his re-invigorating energies to arousing in his own fellow countrymen the spirit of help and compassion for the poor. 'I consider' he said, 'that the great natural sin is the neglect of the masses and that is one of the causes of our downfall. No amount of politics would be of any avail, until the masses of India are once more well educated, well-fed and well cared for. I will go into a thousand hells cheerfully if I can arouse my countrymen to stand on their own feet and be men, inspired with the spirit of Karma Yoga.'

His abiding significance lies in what he accomplished among his people, kindling a flame from the dying embers of their past and awakening in them hope for their future.

Swami Vivekananda's life was a very short one — he lived for only 39 years. 'To look back across the 39 years of his life,' said a writer, 'is to be impressed anew with the amazing amount of effort that he concentrated within the brief period given to him as well as with the influence that those 39 years exercised. This man, compact of energy both of speech and action, will continue to be remembered as a significant figure dominating his time and leaving an enduring influence behind him.'

IS HINDUISM RETARDING INDIA'S NATIONAL GROWTH?

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

The New York Times, May 20, 1963 carried a report with the two column caption: 'Indian Cleric Assails Hinduism as Retarding Nation's Growth.' Here is the text of the report as it appeared in the paper.

> The Rev. Augustine Sanjeevi Savarirayan of Vellore, India yesterday said the backwardness of India was a result of two Hindu teachings: the doctrines of Karma and of Maya.
>
> 'Hinduism is a negation of life,' he said.
>
> Mr. Savarirayan, a Baptist, spoke from the pulpit of the Madison Avenue Baptist Church at 31st Street. He delivered his sermon in the absence of that church's regular minister, the Rev. John S. Bone, now attending the American Baptist Convention in Detroit.
>
> Although a civilization 6,000 years old, he said, India has been dragging her feet on economic reforms. He charged that the responsibility for this must fall on the Hindu religion. 'It provides no impetus for social action,' he said.
>
> 'In Christianity we are told: "Take no rest and give him no rest until he establishes Jerusalem and make it a praise in all the earth."'
>
> "Sinned in Earlier Life"
>
> 'But according to Hindu doctrine of Karma a man suffers only because he has merited it. Thus, I had an 18 month old son who became ill with polio, and I asked, "What sins has he committed?" I was told: "He has sinned in an earlier life."
>
> 'That is the migration of souls,' Mr. Savarirayan explained. 'One's future is conditioned imperishably by the past.'
>
> The doctrine of Maya teaches that what we think is the real world is actually an illusion, he went on, 'because we lack full knowledge we think it is real.'
>
> In the last 15 years, however, the Indian people have taken a great leap forward, he said.
>
> 'The faces you see in the streets are the same as those of 1947. But the attitude in them is one of hope for the future.'
>
> This has been due, he asserted, to India's president, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, who has so reinterpreted the doctrines of Karma and Maya as to reduce their fatalistic implications.
>
> Now India is open to social improveme according to the minister.
>
> 'Christian missions have an opportunity u paralleled in history to bring India to Christ.'
>
> Mr. Savarirayan mentioned the work of t Christian Medical College and Hospital at Vello of which he is general superintendent, stressing t ecumenical nature of that institution. Sixty-tw churches are cooperating in the venture, he sai
>
> The purpose of his visit to this country, th minister said in an interview, is to promote intere in and enlist aid for the work at Vellore.

To say that a religion is retarding a nation' growth is about the most serious charge th anyone could make these days against a religion. It should therefore be possible t examine this charge in the light of facts avai able to everyone for verification.

The law of life is the law of growth. It i the true law of Reality, for without grow there cannot be fulfilment. And experienc Reality is an awareness of fulfilment. Al strivings for national growth, in the ultima analysis, are conscious, more often unconscio mass movements towards this fulfilment. N religion today can claim the unquestioni allegiance of its votaries without being respon sive to man's aspirations for growth. In fa it is not a modern development to whic religion is required to accommodate itself At least in Hinduism, from the earliest tim the very business of religion was taken to b the business of being conducive to growth an advancement. In the Śantiparvan of the *Maha bharata* Bhiṣma says:

prabhavārthāya bhūtānām dharma prava
canam kritam
yat syāt prabhava-saṁyuktam sa dhar
iti niścayaḥ.

Dharma was declared for the advanceme and growth of all creatures. Therefore wha brings on advancement and growth is dharm

Therefore to retard the nation's growth is against the very spirit of Hinduism.

Then what has Hinduism been doing in practice? Anyone knowing anything about the history of modern India knows that it was a renaissance in Hinduism which supplied the main motive power for the struggle for independence in India. If attainment of independence is a sign of national decay, of course Hinduism must take the main bulk of blame for that.

Mr. Savarirayan said that 'the backwardness of India was the result of two Hindu teachings, the doctrines of karma and māyā.' Students of human civilization know well that except in regard to the economic aspect, India is not only not a backward country in any sense, but the seat of a very ancient and advanced civilization. In regard to the economic aspect of backwardness, how far is it the responsibility of the doctrine of māyā?

Contrary to popular or wilful misconception, the doctrine of māyā does not deny the empirical world as we see it. Its main purpose is to prove the reality of Brahman, or to establish the fact that behind, beyond and permeating everything, there is the reality of the Supreme Spirit which is the essence of everything that moves or stands still. From the standpoint of the Supreme Spirit, appearances are nothing more or less than appearances. This doctrine of māyā is erroneously called 'illusionism.'

In the multi-religious India about 85% of the people are no doubt Hindus. But among them we are not sure whether even 10% of the people accept the theory of māyā. Others outright reject this doctrine. How is it possible for this minority to determine the entire character of the nation? Again, somehow it is from among those who accept the theory of māyā that have arisen some of the greatest men of India, who by their thought and work have made history in India and also have enriched human civilization itself.

The theory of karma is accepted by all Hindus. And what does this theory teach? It teaches that man is the maker of his destiny. Man, individually, is born in a world of his own making and moulds his own world by his thought and action, after being born. There is no other rational theory known to men which can satisfactorily explain diversities existing among human beings. If India has emerged again after about one thousand years of foreign domination, it is not a little due to this faith of the Hindus, that they had fallen from heights due to their own karma and they can also rise again by their own karma.

Now, if the credit for progress in those regions of the world where there is no doctrine of māyā or karma in the picture, would be claimed by a particular life-affirming religion, where then will go the blame for the two Wars, the armament race, and those other concomitants of progress, those painful problems of homes and hearts, minds and characters, human relations and inhuman crimes? It is as absurd to say that Hinduism is retarding India's progress as to say that Christianity was responsible for Hiroshima's bombing.

'Hinduism is a negation of life,' he said. If this were true in any sense, how could Hinduism continue to be a living religion down millenniums? How could then Hinduism withstand all the vigorous onslaughts of some incoming religions which left no effort unbent to take the life out of it? Further, how could then Hinduism go on expanding over the world? Mr. Savarirayan will be knowing very well that the life-negating Hinduism of his concept, by some mysterious way, is very much a living religion which looks science and future calmly in the face. Hinduism is not a negation of life. But it has its own way of viewing life. Perhaps this should be permissible.

Mr. Savarirayan said that 'India has been dragging her feet on economic reforms' and for this responsibility must fall on Hindu religion, for 'it provides no impetus for social action.' The proper way of viewing such a problem is not in heaping blame on a particular religion, whatever may be its failures and omissions — and Christianity also has been in India for more than 1,900 years—but for every Indian to stand up and own his responsibility and apply himself in co-operative ventures with all for removing the sickness shared by all.

The charge of Mr. Savarirayan that Hinduism provides no impetus for social action has no basis either in Hindu scriptures or in Hindu practice. There will not be a single passage of 'other regard' in the *New Testament* for which parallel cannot be shown in anterior Hindu scriptures. In India there are hundreds of social service institutions where Hindus are engaged in dynamic social action in various fields. In times of national calamities Hindus risk their health, life and give money without stint to help their fellow countrymen, irrespective of their religion. In 1961-62 in the hospitals of only one Hindu organization, (the Ramakrishna Mission), 18,038 indoor patients, and 2,505,155 outdoor patients were treated. It spent Rs. 53,000 in various relief works during the same year. In the same year, in the educational institutions of the same organization, 52,750 students were taught. These figures, though humble, speak of certain facts contrary to Mr. Savarirayan's contention. If Mahatma Gandhi was a social worker, his source of inspiration was undoubtedly at least partially, his own faith. Hindu missionary organizations are engaged in doing social work in many other countries besides India. Hindus will, however, freely and thankfully acknowledge that from the examples of Christian missionary work in India, they have learnt a great deal in regard to organized social work.

Mr. Savarirayan has every right to accept reject Hindu philosophical doctrines, or inv Christian missions to avail the opportunity bringing India to Christ, an opportunity th has been open for nineteen centuries. But assail a religion of 85% of a people in foreign country, and that on grounds th cannot stand any scrutiny, was not an act charity toward neighbours.

Hindus accept Christianity as a natio religion of India without reservation and th have a warm place in their heart for Chri This fact is the real asset of Christianity i India, more precious than the evangelical ze pushed beyond regions of truth. The logic the necessity of living together for all times come, and today when all the religions of th world are ranged against militant atheis unabashed hedonism, and callous cynicism. is time, we believe, there should be dialog between religions on the level of mutuality understanding and respect with a view to le from each other.

The principle for such a fruitful encoun was enunciated in the third century B.C. the great emperor Asoka. He declared in o of his inscriptions :

> 'The King Piyadasi honours all sec monks and householders ; he honours the by gifts and various kinds of favours... Fo he who does reverence to his own sect whi disparaging the sects of others wholly fro attachment to his own, with intent to en- hance the splendour of his own sect, reality by such conduct inflicts the severe injury on his own sect.'

Karma in its effect on character is the most tremendous power that man has to deal with. Man is, as it were, a centre, and is attracting all the powers of the universe towards himself, and in this centre is fusing them all and again sending them off in a big current.... Our karma determines what we deserve and what we can assimilate. We are responsible for what we are ; and whatever we wish ourselves to be, we have the power to make ourselves. If what we are now has been the result of our own past actions, it certainly follows that whatever we wish to be in future can be produced by our present actions.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE GREAT EQUATION

(The history of Śwetaketu's enlightenment as narrated in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* based on the commentary of Śankaracharya.)

S. K. GUPTA

In a sacred grove in ancient India lived Aaruni, a sage of great renown. His twelve year old son Śwetaketu had attained the age of initiation and schooling. Aaruni found him fit to receive higher education. As he was planning a long pilgrimage, he could not undertake the education of the boy. He therefore decided to send him to the home of a preceptor.

(In those days sages and savants ran free centres of education up to the university stage in their own homes. The acolytes had to do the daily chores for the preceptor in lieu. This *seva,* this service to the Guru, was an essential part of scholastic discipline.)

Aaruni told Śwetaketu, 'My dear, it is time you went to a competent preceptor suited to our family, to go through the order of Brahmacharya, to undergo the discipline of the life of a student. It is highly undesirable that a member of our family should lack education and just remain a Brahmin by caste and not qualify to function as a real Brahmin.'

The son left for his preceptor's home and the father started on his pilgrimage.

Twelve years passed. Śwetaketu finished his education and came back home, a young man of twenty-four. Having studied all the Vedas thoroughly, he had developed an intellectually superior attitude. He considered himself an expert at polemics and was full of arrogance of erudition. Finding this trait in his son's character, quite foreign to his own, Aaruni wanted to teach him the lore of the Real.

Said Aaruni — 'Well learned Doctor! whence this conceit? What is this knowledge *par excellence* that you have acquired, which makes you so proud? Did you, by any chance, seek instructions from your Guru about that one Principle which, when heard leaves nothing unheard, when argued exhausts all arguments, when cognized dispels all doubt? A most comprehensive study of Veda or of other lores becomes infructuous in the absence of the knowledge of this Principle of Reality.'

Śwetaketu: 'Surely, father, this is extraordinary — how can instruction on a Unitary Principle, lead to the comprehension of this cosmic diversity?'

Aaruni: 'Listen how. Let us take an instance from common experience. A potter makes pots, pitchers, pans, plates and so on and so forth out of clay. If you know about the clay, all its mutations, these numerous pottery become known.'

Śwetaketu: 'But surely, Sir, effects differ from their causes — the mutations and the mutated are not the same, and the knowledge of the cause cannot generate the knowledge of its effects.'

Aaruni: 'After all there is no substantial difference between a cause and its effects. The cause flows into its effects. Once you know the nature of the cause, the nature of its effects becomes known. The apparent variety of effects is due to a variety of expression. The effects are mere names with no separate substance. The substance is clay. The variations are only nominal. Similarly the knowledge of a gold bar will exhaust the knowledge of all its mutations like crowns, bangles or other ornaments. So also with iron — the knowledge of the substance of a little nail clipper will lead to the knowledge of all objects made of iron and steel.'

Śwetaketu: 'Presumably, father, my revered preceptor is not aware of this Principle of Reality — otherwise there is no reason why he should not have imparted this knowledge to me, seeing that I was such a dutiful and devoted student. Therefore, Sir, may I have the honour of being instructed by you?'

(Normally a student should not thus speak deprecatingly of his teacher — but apparently Śwetaketu was afraid of being sent back.)

Aaruni: 'Very well my dear.

'Prior to its appearance, this world of experience was just "*Sat*" (existence *per se*), One, without a Second. There is, however, a school of thought, which holds the view that Nothing existed before, there was only the Vacuum without any content; therefore the Thing came out of Nothing.'

The former is the Vedantic view. According to it, the one Eternal Timeless Principle is '*Sat*', the Principle of Pure Existence, Consciousness, Spirit, Reality, which is subtle, unqualitied, solitary, pervasive, perfect and partless. *This* sense world, as manifested through *Nāma* (concepts), *Rūpa* (percepts) and *Kriya* (motion), *was* definitely that Reality, prior to its manifestation, as a process of mutations — as a continuum of cause effect relations. The use of the past tense does not indicate that the empirical world is non-existent. What is intended is, that being particularized by percepts and concepts, the manifested world is apprehended as '*Idam*' (*This*) — while prior to such manifestation, it remains and is apprehended only as *Sat* (existence *per se*). This indeed is obvious for particularization stems from manifestation. 'This'ness comes only after the panorama opens out; prior to that, there is only 'Is'ness. 'Being' precedes 'becoming' as its cause. Take the case of dreamless sleep. In that state what is apprehended is only existence, mind and existence coalesce — the mind is emptied out of all other contents. Same is the case with the pre-manifestation state. To take a more commonplace instance: While going out in the morning a man sees a lump of clay in the potter's yard — just an unspecified lump of clay. On return in the afternoon he finds a whole array of pots and pitchers. Would not he say that all these were just clay in the morning? Similarly it is said that all '*this* choir of earth and furniture of heaven' was just *Sat* (Reality) prior to their appearance. That does not imply that they are non-existent at the time of their apprehension, just as the pottery are not non-clay at the time of their perception.

That Reality is Unitary, that is to say, its effects — that is the world of experience — are not constituted of any other causal principle. It is the only Cause.

(*To be continued*)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Swami Vimalananda's article 'Prasthana Traya and Its Background' is the fifth instalment of the series.

Swami Nityabodhananda is Head of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre at Geneva, Switzerland. In his article 'The Conscious and the Unconscious' he discusses the relation between the conscious, the unconscious and intuition in a most revealing manner.

Sri M. V. Sridatta Sarma, M.A., is in the services of the Maharaja of Mysore and interested in the Pauranic lore. His contributions have often appeared in the *Vedanta Kesari*. Here in his article 'Worship of the Sun' he narrates the importance such worship played in the life of the Indian people.

'Message of the Buddha' by Br. Atma Chaitanya of the Ramakrishna Order is a paper read by him on the occasion of the Buddha Jayanti at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, on May 12, 1963.

Br. Madhavan is of the Ramakrishna Order and his

The article 'Swami Vivekananda Teachings' is the text of a speech delivered by Sri V. Sivasupramaniam on the occasion of Vivekananda Centenary Celebration at the Red Cross Hall, Kandy on 16-6-'63 at which Swami Ranganathananda was the main speaker. The celebration was sponsored by: (1) The Kandy Buddhist Association, (2) The Kandy Bauddha Mandalaya, (3) The Highland Welfare Youth League and (4) The Kandy Divine Life Society. The Meeting was presided over by Sir Arthur Ranasinha, Former Governor of the Central Bank of Ceylon. Sri V. Sivasupramaniam is District Judge of Kandy (Ceylon).

Swami Budhananda, a former Editor of the *Vedanta Kesari*, is presently Assistant Minister at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York. His article 'Is Hinduism Retarding India's National Growth?' is a reply to the allegations made by Mr. Augustine Sanjeevi Savarirayan of Vellore, in a sermon delivered in a Baptist Church in New York, a report of which appeared in the *New York Times*, May 20, 1963.

Sri S. K. Gupta is Commissioner for Relief, Government of West Bengal, Calcutta. He presents in his article 'The Great Equation' the VI chapter of the Chandogya Upaniṣad with the commentary of Sri Sankara in the form of a dialogue. This is the first instalment of the series.

INTEGRITY

The prestige and survival of a nation depends upon its integrity. We have heard much about integration and how to achieve it. Various suggestions have been mooted and are before the country. But it is our firm opinion that unless the individuals which form the nation are themselves integrated, it will be idle to expect that merely by publishing some brochures and by propaganda we can achieve integration. The nation must have concrete examples of integrity, which it can follow.

What do we mean by the individual being integrated? It is the firmness on the part of the individual to follow truth and resist temptation wherever he may be placed. It is the genuine love for the members which form the whole nation irrespective of the fact as to which part of the country he belongs. Let one ask for oneself whether what one is doing, is in the interest of the whole community, the whole nation, or in the interest of a section or a party to which one belongs or for his own individual prestige, power or gain. If one's conscience is not so dulled as that of a hardened criminal it must be able to guide him in the right direction. All hitch, all quarrel come when self-assertion and greed enter into men.

Therefore, let everyone be watchful of what he does in this critical situation and be merciless in bringing to book those who stray away. Let no considerations stand in the way. Again when people are bearing the burden of the taxes, let those in office too economize. It would be a fair gesture on the part of those who are in office if they do so. People then will understand that they mean real business; that every farthing they contribute is being well-utilized. Then only will they not feel their burden. We have several slogans before us, but slogans alone won't make us good and great. It is action that follows the slogans that does it. It is up to all of us to act up to them. In one word let us be possessed of unquestioned integrity, wherever and in whatever situation we are placed. Thus alone can we build a brilliant future for our country.

ABOUT OUR NEXT NUMBER

As our readers know well that our next number is going to be the Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Special Number, it may be delayed by two weeks or more. We request our readers to bear with us for the delay.

The first page series will be suspended during that month. Other serialised articles also will be published only in September.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

WHAT RELIGION IS: Swami Vivekananda. Edited by John Yale. Pub. Phoenix House, London. 30 s.

Brilliantly introduced by Christopher Isherwood, this volume of extracts from the writings and speeches of Swami Vivekananda is a worthy tribute to the mighty man of God whose birth centenary is being celebrated this year by millions of his grateful countrymen.

Designed to meet the needs of an average reader in the West, this work presents within 100,000 words the fundamentals of the Vedantic Teaching as propagated by Swami Vivekananda. The compiler, John Yale, is already familiar to the readers of Sri Ramakrishna literature as the author of the entertaining book a *Yankee and the Swamis* and we should say he has shown a rare capacity to summarize things without leaving out anything of value in the process. Divided into seven chapters, the work draws upon the writings, speeches, letters (published and unpublished) of Swamiji and presents his Message under the following titles: Ideal of a Universal Religion, Principles and Practices of Vedanta, Self-realization through Knowledge, through Control of Mind, through Selfless work, through Love of God, and finally the Great Teachers of the World. In the last section are treated Krishna, Buddha, Jesus and Sri Ramakrishna as typical exemplars of the High Knowledge presented in the earlier sections.

Mr Isherwood's Introduction gives a most engaging account of the career of Swamiji with particular reference to his days in the United States.

We have no doubt that this book will draw many to the original works of Swami Vivekananda. A successful compilation.

M. P. PANDIT.

TRUE EDUCATION: By M. K. Gandhi. Pp. 269. Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad-14. Price Rs. 3.50.

Education was an integral part of Gandhiji's scheme for national regeneration, and this book sets out *in extenso* his views on many matters of day to day importance in the sphere of education. Altogether they make a well conceived code of education to which every one can always turn with profit. In truth, his opinions expressed candidly have an element of eternity about them befitting a world Teacher, as he was and his doctrines had never been fashioned by the varying hour. As the great educator Montessori said of him (P. 148) he was "a saint rather than a man".

Gandhiji would like education to commence right from the cradle. Why should not, he asks, a mother learn the gayatri mantra and teach it to her child? In fact he would even urge knowledge of the Self to be imparted to children (P. 125). As a corollary, he liked every Hindu boy and girl to learn Sanskrit, and had also set much store by music which in his opinion "contributed to national uplift" (P. 112). The teachers, he advised, would do well to instil into the children Ram Nam. His own scheme for moral education comprised the teaching of Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharata and Bhagavata (P. 158). Every student may live according to his circumstances; but nevertheless, he should keep constantly before himself the aim of attaining to God-head.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

GYPSIES — FORGOTTEN CHILDREN OF INDIA: By Chaman Lal. Pub. Publication Division, Government of India; Price Rs. 5. Pp. 214.

The above mentioned publication is a reliable compendium on the matters of Gypsy life in the West in particular, mainly represented from an Indian point of view, — with an all out interest. Though the fact of some Indian legacy in the lives of these Gypsies, is not a startling discovery (as already many a Gypsologist and Orientalist has agreed on this point), yet the first-hand study claimed by the author of this book has added further to the authenticity of such study. It is a corroboration, so to say, of the previous claim that these ancient wandering people have had some connection or other with the Aryan-land of Hindusthan in the remote past which the quicksand of time and history has swallowed.

The evidences put forward by the author from their social, religious and linguistic philological affinity is not only remarkable but comprehensive. This kind of study about the Gypsy-life was not very popular in India till now. Of course, in other countries the interest about them was far more encouraging. Recently there was a report that the first scientific work on Gypsy dialect in Sweden, covering 400 pages written in English after 20 years of labour, by the librarian Mr. Ljungberg of the Upsala University, has been published. It is agreed even in this latest book that the conjugations and declensions of this Gypsy language are of Sanskrit origin and that Romani is not a vulgar talk but a hearty communication of these romantic people and their chequered life-spirit. It is surprising that inspite of heavy onslaughts on them, they preserve a good deal of their original language!

BR. SUDHANGSU.

WESTERN AND EASTERN SPIRITUAL VALUES OF LIFE: By Sri Y. Jagannatham, B.A., Vrajaraja Kuteeram, Venkatraopet, Eluru (W. G. Dt.) Andhra Pradesh. Pp. 53. Price Re. 1.

This is a paper read at the Institute of Oriental Philosophy, Vrindaban. True to the spirit of the title, the author traverses easily through all the systems of Indian philosophy as well as the philosophy of the West. The spiritual values of life are unfolded through a discussion about the concept of Spirit and Spiritual; through a relation between moral and spiritual values; through pointed distinction between the spiritual values and religious values. Together with a historical retrospect and an enumeration of the difficulties in the way of the mutual appreciation of the Eastern and Western spiritual values, the book commands a place for itself amongst informative series.

T. S. RAGHAVAN.

SELECTED LETTERS—II: By M. K. Gandhi. Navajivan Publication House, Ahmedabad. Pages 58. Price 0.45 nP.

Translated from the original Hindi and Gujarati, seventy pithy sayings of Bapuji have been recorded in this booklet, which reveal the wisdom and ready-wit of the reformer-cum-preacher.

T. S. RAGHAVAN.

HINDI

HAMARA AHAR: By Swaminathan, Srivastava and Bhagavan. Pub. Ganesh & Co., Madras-17. Price Rs. 2.00.

This is a Hindi edition of the successful book by the authors in English on *Our Food*. The work is commendable for the manner in which it puts across scientific data regarding nutrition and dietary values of Indian vegetables etc., in a homely language so as to be intelligible to the average reader. The authors have considered the shortage of certain cereals in the country and in the light of the availability of roots, vegetables of high caloric value etc., they have tried to prescribe modes of diet which could be applied with benefit in the middle-class and lower-income groups. Books of this type are new in our country and they should be encouraged in every possible way.

M. P. PANDIT.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

AT ASANSOL

The birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda was observed in the Asansol Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama premises from the 11th April to the 30th April. The 20-day programme started with special puja, homa and bhajan.

Main features of the celebrations were: (1) A procession on the 12th April through the main roads of Asansol. (2) Speeches by senior Swamis of the Order, and other eminent persons on the various aspects of Swamiji's life and teachings. (3) An exhibition, the most attractive feature of which was the life history of Swami Vivekananda told through clay models. (4) Bhajan by renowned radio artistes. (5) The presentation of the Baul Kirtan. (6) Singing of Ramayana songs. (7) Display of physical feats. (8) A drama "Swamiji" staged by the boys of the Ashram School. (9) Life of Swamiji discussed with the help of magic lantern.

AT SHILLONG

Shillong (Assam) observed the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda from the 5th May, 1963. The eight-day programme was as follows:

May 5, 1963 — Inaugural day: Chanting of Vedic hymns, procession through the principal streets of the town and a public meeting. The public meeting was presided over by Sri Vishnu Sahay, Governor of Assam. The speakers were

Swamis Ranganathananda and Pranavatmananda. May 6 — Public meeting and magic lantern lecture. May 7 — "Ladies' Day". May 8 — Unveiling of a memorial tablet to mark Swamiji's visit and stay in Shillong in the year 1901. Speeches on the occasion by distinguished persons. Evening there was a lecture by Swami Ranganathananda, followed by a musical soiree organised by local artistes. May 9 — "Children's Day". Recitations and presentation of "Vivekananda Lila Giti". May 10 — Devotional songs. May 11 — "Students' Day". May 12 — Public meeting addressed by eminent persons.

At Bangalore

The foundation of the Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Hall at Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Bangalore was laid by Srimat Swami Yatiswaranandaji Maharaj on Sunday, the 28th April 1963. The main celebrations commenced from May 8, 1963. Swami Yatiswaranandaji inaugurated the eleven-day function, presided over the function on the 12th evening and gave the valedictory address on the 18th. The entire programme consisted of eleven evening and five morning sessions, in which a large number of persons — Sannyasins, Poets, Scientists and Philosophers — participated. Appropriate Vedic chantings during some of the sessions added to the solemnity of the programmes, the main features of which were symposia and seminars on Swamiji's life and teachings; musical entertainments; dramas; public meetings; devotional music; and tributes to Swami Vivekananda by poets, philosophers and scientists. There were a 'Childrens' Day' and a 'Women's Day' also.

At Gwalior

Ramakrishna Ashrama, Gwalior inaugurated on 17th January '63 the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda with puja, bhajans, kirtans, aratrikams. About 400 'Daridra-narayanas' were fed. The same evening a public meeting was held. On 31st March and 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th and 7th April, '63 Srimat Swami Satswarupanandaji Maharaj of the Ramakrishna Order delivered speeches, on various subjects.

At Masulipatam

Masulipatam, evinced great enthusiasm in celebrating Swamiji's birth centenary with a twelve day's programme commencing from 28th April '63. The venue of the celebrations w the compound of 'Vivekananda Mandir', th foundation for which was laid by Swami Ram krishnananda about sixty years ago. The cele rations were inaugurated by performing puja a homa by Swami Suddhasatwananda, Manage Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras; the same eve ing he spoke on Sri Ramakrishna. He gave t more lectures next day: morning — On 't message of the Gita' and second in the eveni on 'Swami Vivekananda and his philosophy'.

The various programmes on other days inclu ed prayer, meditation, yoga classes, lectures a discourses on Gita, Upanishads, Patanjali sutra Sri Rama and Sri Krishna by well-known perso screening of films on the lives of Sri Rama krishna and Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mothe by Swami Sarvajnananda; 'Yakshagana', feed ing of 'Daridranarayanas', music, and devotio songs. There was a 'Nrityagana' on the life o Swami Vivekananda by two little children.

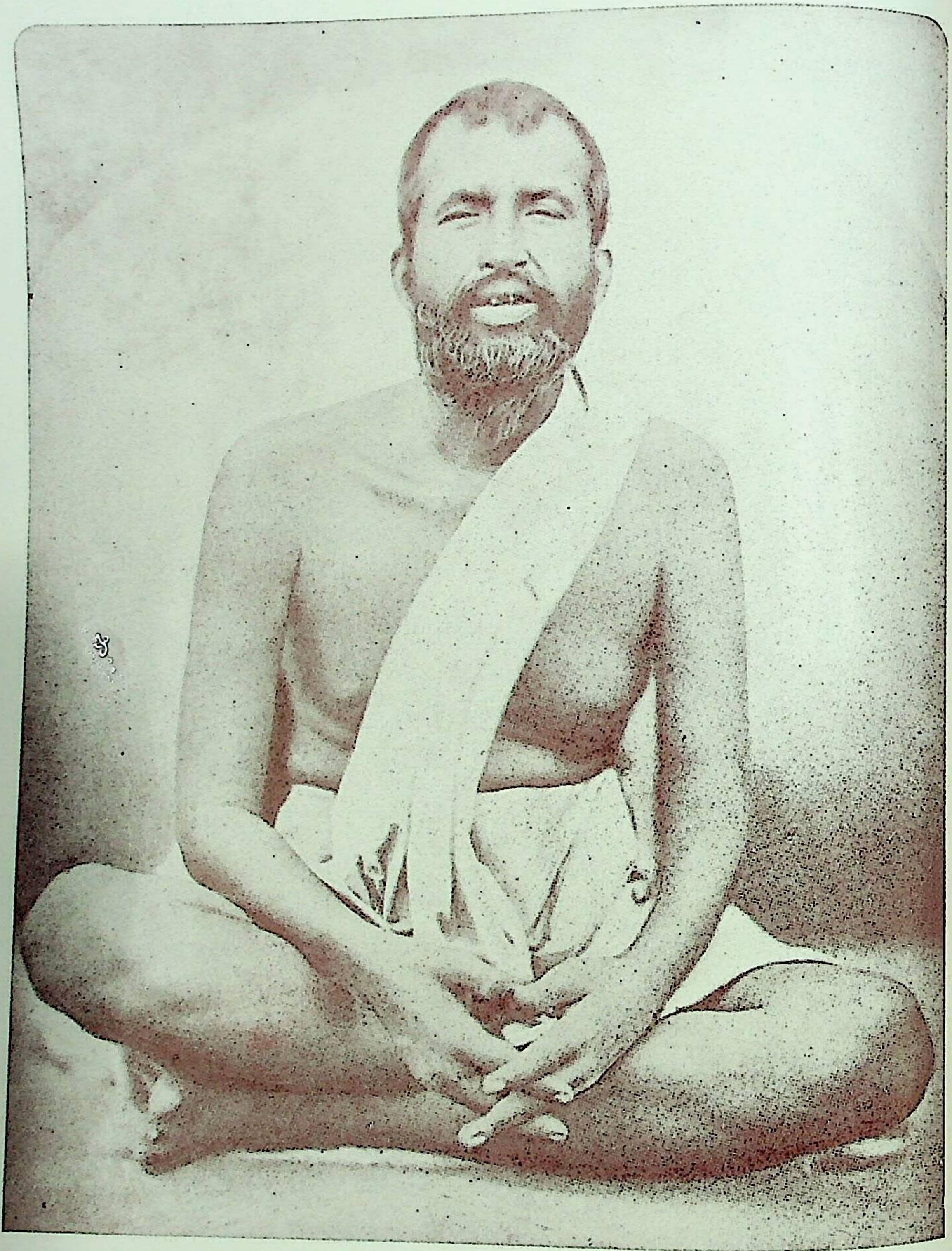
SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH CHARITABL DISPENSARY, MYLAPORE

Report for 1962-1963

The Dispensary completed its 37 years of u ful service by the end of the year under rep The total number of patients treated during t year was 1,55,037 as per details given below:

Eye Department: New 2,454; Old 8,1 Total 10,630; Extraocular operations 85; R fractions 291. *E. N. T. Department*: Old 8,1 New 4,488; Total 12,603; Tonsillectomies 6 *Dental Department*: Extractions 3,217; Ca 2,232; Pyorrhoea 2,240; Total 7,689. *X-ray D partment*: X-ray 666, Screening 104. The La boratory examined 1,223 different kinds of spe mens. Milk was distributed among 1,53 under-nourished women and children, dur the period. Medicated milk was dis buted to 6,356 sickly and rickety childr During the period 22,359 injections were giv 633 Minor Surgical Operations were done a 16,958 dressings were attended. The actual rece in 1962-63 were Rs. 25,723.21 and expen Rs. 36,800.88 resulting in a net deficit Rs.11,077.67. The management express their gr titude and thanks to all their friends, contri tors and sympathisers and appeal to the ge rous public for their continued assistance a co-operation.

The Birthday of Swami Ramakrishnananda falls on July 19, 1963.



BHAGAVAN SRI RAMAKRISHNA

. . . *Be bold and face*
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY NUMBER

VOL. L AUGUST 1963 No. 4

SRI RAMAKRISHNA ON HIS BELOVED DISCIPLE

'Narendra is a boy of a very high order. He excels in every thing: vocal and instrumental music and studies. Again, he has control over his sense organs. He is truthful and has discrimination and dispassion. He has been devoted to God since his very boyhood. Religious practice on his part is superfluous.... Narendra is independent even of me. He is free from ignorance and delusion. He has no bonds. He is a great soul. He has many good qualities. So many virtues in one person!... Is he not unusually good?...

'Narendra belongs to the realm of the Absolute. He has a manly nature. So many devotees come here, but there is not one like him. Every now and then I take stock of the devotees. I find that some are like lotuses with ten petals, some like lotuses with sixteen petals, some like lotuses with a hundred petals. But among lotuses Narendra is a thousand-petalled lotus. Other devotees may be like pots or pitchers; but Narendra is a huge water-barrel. Others may be like pools or tanks; but Narendra is a huge reservoir like the Haldarpukur.... Narendra is a very big receptacle; one that can hold many things. He is like a bamboo with a big hollow space inside. Narendra is not under the control of anything. He is not under the control of attachment or sense pleasures....

'I have not seen another boy like Narendra.... He loses external consciousness in meditation during whole nights. My Narendra is a coin with no alloy whatsoever; ring it and you hear the truest sound. He does everything with the greatest ease. He is a true knower of Brahman. He sees light when he sits for meditation. Is it for nothing that I love Narendra so much?

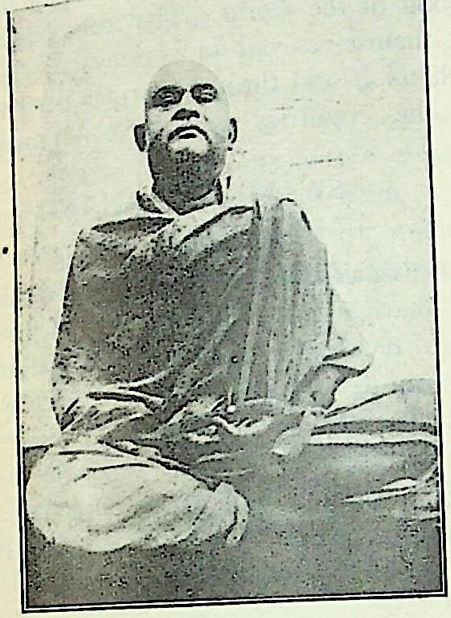
'....Keshab, I saw, has become a world famous man on account of the abundance of one power but Narendra has in him eighteen such powers in the fullest measure. The hearts of Keshab and Vijay are brightened by a light of knowledge, like the flame of a lamp. But looking at Narendra I found that the very Sun of Knowledge had risen in his heart and removed from there even the slightest tinge of Māyā and delusion.... It is not I who say so. Mother showed me all that.'

SRI SARADA DEVI — THE HOLY MOTHER

WHAT HOLY MOTHER SAID ABOUT SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

'Naren is of divine origin and full of purity from his infancy and about whom Thakur (Sri Ramakrishna) mentioned that he was a Ṛṣi, a great sage! . . . Though fully imbued with the spirit of renunciation, and an all-embracing love and immersed in the eternal joy of communion with the Infinite, he has been suffering for the good of others... He gave his life blood to the service of others.... He was specially brought by Sri Thakur (Sri Ramakrishna) from the *Saptarṣimaṇḍala* for preaching his lofty ideals, for the elevation of the masses and for the good of humanity.... He was the greatest *Ṛṣi* of the *Saptarṣis* (seven sages). The Master could have declared that Naren was one among a hundred *Ṛṣis*; but he actually said 'one among the seven'.... What Naren has done will endure for ever. He was born for His work. Thousands will look upon him as the enlightened teacher of the world.'

HOW THE BROTHER-DISCIPLES LOOKED UPON SWAMI VIVEKANANDA



SWAMI BRAHMANANDA

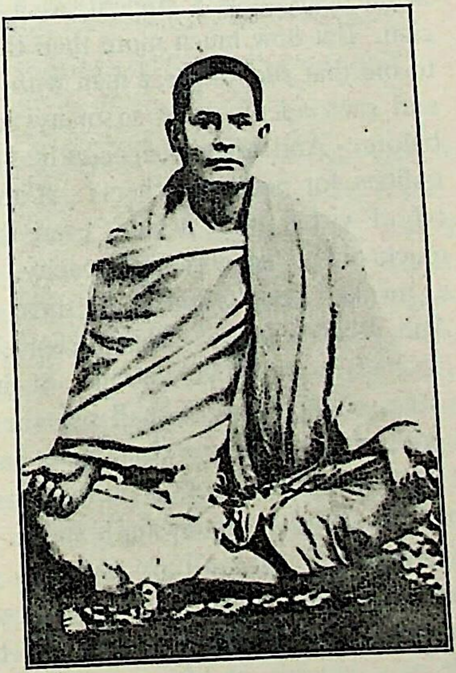
Time there was when the different Bhāṣyas of the same text used to puzzle and bewilder us; but the great Acharya (Sri Ramakrishna) has come to show the ground of their reconciliation and harmony as a whole and has made our Revered Swami Vivekananda the mouthpiece to proclaim the sublime truth which he showed practically in his every day life.[1]... Time alone will show the extent of Swamiji's labours and how much he has raised Mother India, in the estimation of the great nations of the West. ...Let us all rally round the sacred memory of the great life for united effort, for the regeneration of our land and of our people.[2]

SWAMI BRAHMANANDA.

* * * *

Swamiji is Nara-Narayana, one of the seven seers. Lord Shiva Himself took his form for the good of mankind. He incarnated Himself for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many. Don't you see in what a short time he created a tremendous sensation in the world? As the days pass you will understand that everything he taught is true. He sowed seeds which will sprout and grow into a huge tree and in the shade of this tree the world will find peace. .... What joy he used to give us all. Just remembering him our hairs stand on end and we feel an ecstatic thrill. ... Hail Swamiji, the incarnation of Shiva.[3]

SWAMI PREMANANDA.



SWAMI PREMANANDA

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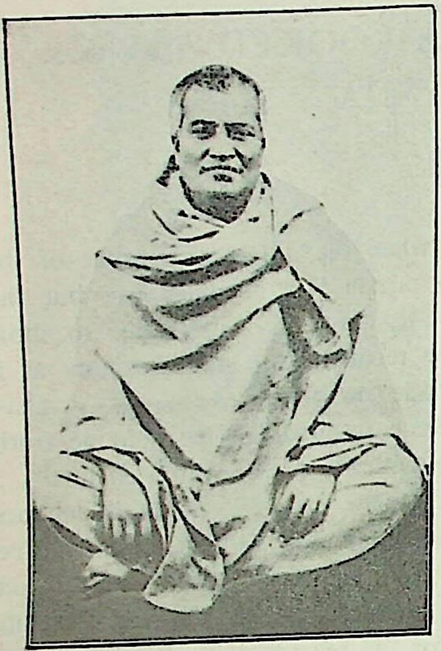
[1] *The Vedanta Kesari,* 1930-31, p. 230.
[2] *Brahmavadin,* 1902, p. 510.
[3] *Vedanta and the West,* No. 139, pp. 32-41.



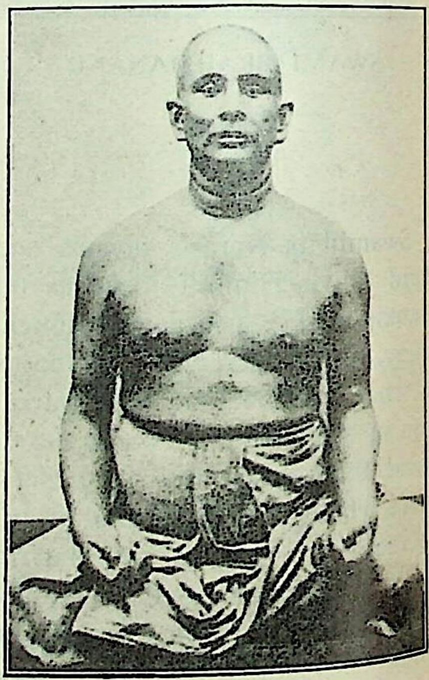
SWAMI SHIVANANDA

It was Swamiji alone who foresaw the innumerable ways in which the power of the Master would find its outlet through diverse channels in diverse modes; few others could visualize them. . . . The Master entrusted Swamiji with the mission of propagating the message of the age. Strengthened by that force, Swamiji too worked for the good of the world. The ideas he left behind will work themselves out in various countries through various channels and through various persons. As a result all the countries will have all-round development.[4]

SWAMI SHIVANANDA.

* * * *

For years we all associated so closely with Swamiji — eating, talking, sharing jokes and stories. Yet we were never able to recognise Swamiji's true nature. He was such an extraordinary soul — how strange we did not realise this while he was alive. Now we understand a little. It was beyond the reach of our intellect to appreciate what a great sage our Master had brought with him. The longer I listened to Uddhava's words, the more I realised this. We did everything together with Swamiji — yet he eluded us. In those days, we all thought he was one of us — only perhaps more able, more talented. An expert in all fields — as a student, as a lecturer, as a musician. But how much more than this he was! It seems to me that such a great man with so many perfections and such adeptness in so many fields was never born before. And what a capacity he had to see the potentialities for good in others! If there was just a tiny bit of virtue in a person, even that he would make much of. That was his capacity. He had the power to awaken people and make them reach great heights. And what a heart! How deeply he felt for others! He had infinite love for all. Such sympathy I never witnessed before and shall not see again. His words could almost bring a dead man back to life! When I talk with you, you soon become drowsy and lose interest. But when Swamiji spoke, even a man in his grave would almost have to jump up and say: 'Let me hear these words!' Swamiji's words were so powerful, both in feeling and language, that they straightaway entered the heart. Everything else was forgotten when he spoke. He was capable of lifting us all to a higher level of consciousness.[5]



SWAMI TURIYANANDA

SWAMI TURIYANANDA.

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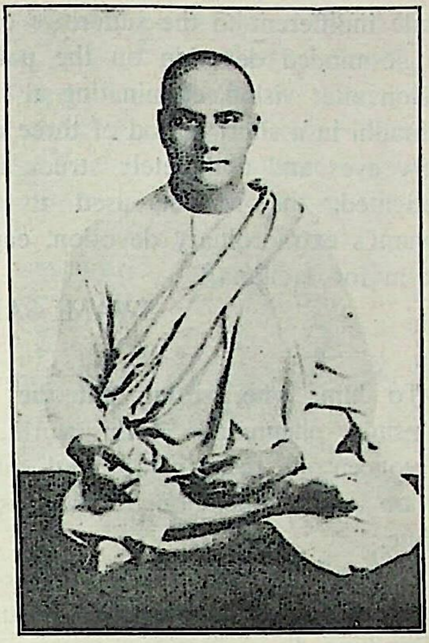
[4] *Prabuddha Bharata,* August 1962, p. 323.

[5] *Vedanta and the West,* No. 154, p. 56.



SWAMI ABHEDANANDA

Those who have met Swamiji and heard him speak, will remember his fascinating personality, his fine intelligent face beaming with celestial radiance mingled with the innocent smile of a child, his deep musical voice, his uncommon eloquence, and above all, his wonderful oratorical powers which drew from the hearts of his appreciative listeners, the exclamation that he was an orator by divine right.

I have met many people in this country (U.S.A.) during my six years' stay who regard the 'Raja Yoga' in the same light as the most devout Christian regards his own scriptures. It has been a revelation to many agnostic and sceptical minds; it has transformed the characters of many. Every passage of this wonderful book is charged as it were with the soul-stirring spiritual power generated by the gigantic battery of the pure soul of our great Yogi. . . . After receiving the highest honours from three great nations, Swamiji's mind was neither elated with pride or self-conceit, nor was his head turned for half a second from the blessed feet of the beloved Master. With the same childlike simplicity, with the same humility of character which he had possessed before he came to America and keeping the same fire of renunciation alive in his soul, he realized the transitoriness of all the triumphal honours which were showered upon him. . . . As a man his character was pure and spotless; as a philosopher he was the greatest of all Eastern and Western philosophers. . . . He was like the living example of Vedanta in all its different branches.[6]

SWAMI ABHEDANANDA.

* * * *

SWAMI SARADANANDA

With Swami Vivekananda, meditation was as it were, his life. He kept at all times his mind meditating on God, even while he was eating, lying, sitting and doing other necessary physical acts. The Master used to say that he had attained perfection in meditation.[7] . . . I had witnessed with my own eyes the intense eagerness of Swami Vivekananda for the realization of God, how the spiritual awakening came on him when he went to deposit the fee for his Law Examination; how, goaded to restlessness by it, he ran, oblivious of the world outside, barefooted and with only one piece of cloth on, through the streets of the city to the feet of Sri Guru at Kasipur and, like one mad, laid bare to him the anguish of his heart, and obtained his grace; how, since then he spent his time night and day in japa, meditation, devotional songs and spiritual study; how on account of his boundless enthusiasm for sadhana, his usually tender heart turned adamant and remained quite indifferent to the sufferings of his mother and brothers; and how, advancing with single-minded devotion on the path of sadhana pointed out by the Guru, he was having vision after vision, culminating at last in his first enjoyment of the bliss of the Nirvikalpa samadhi in a short period of three or four months. All these things took place before our very eyes and completely struck us dumb. Greatly delighted, the Master used to praise highly the Swami's extraordinary devotion, eagerness and enthusiasm for sadhana.[8]

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[6] *Brahmavadin*, 1903, pp. 328-347.

[7] *Sri Ramakrishna, The Great Master*, p. 472.

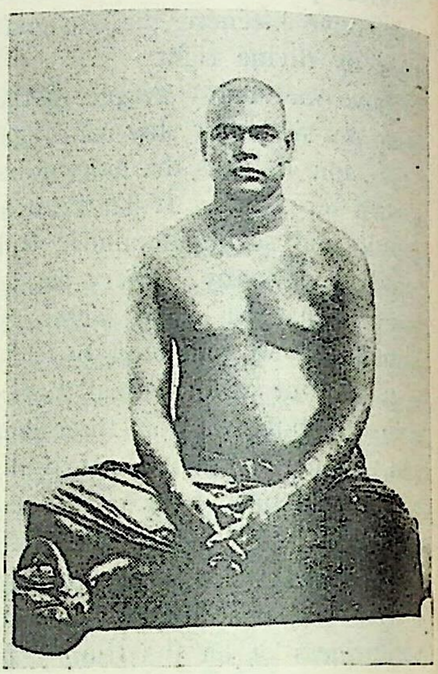
SWAMI SARADANANDA.

* * * *

To him, who, sifting out the Eternal from the transitory phenomena of this world, made it his sport to concentrate thereon his mind, purified by discrimination and renunciation, to that discriminating soul I salute.

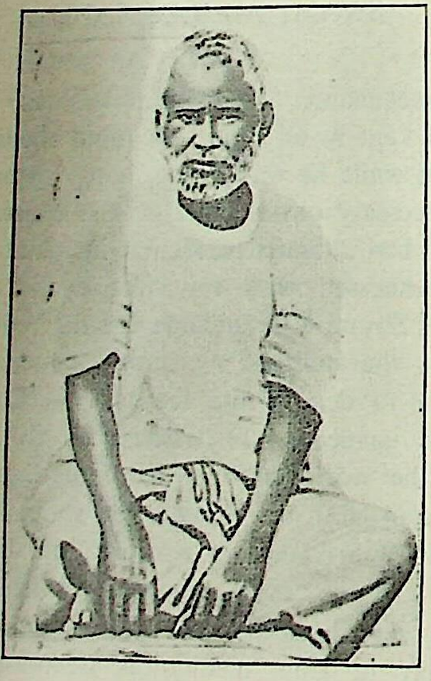
To him whose mind was immersed in the bliss that comes of discrimination, whose nature delighted solely in kindling discrimination in others, and whose grace was made beautiful by the glow of discrimination, to that discriminating soul my salutations ever go.

To him in whose graceful form, truth and knowledge had their abode, and which imparts a joy incessant, without beginning or end, to that embodiment of bliss I bow.



SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA

Verily as the sun dispels the blinding darkness, as the Lord Vishnu destroys the wicked ones, in exactly the same manner he whose handsome appearance, the cynosure of all eyes, drives away the threefold misery of life —



SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

To that Teacher of teachers, supremely pure, the guardian of the world, the lovable, the prince of Yogins, who took up the human form for the good of mankind, to that Vivekananda I bow.

I salute that king of renouncers, the sage, Vivekananda, who was of the essence of *Satchidananda*, the Lord, the remover of distress.[9]

SWAMI RAMAKRISHNANANDA.

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What devotion Swamiji had for Sri Ramakrishna! One time the Master gave him a pair of shoes to wear, but he never wore them. Others learnt devotion from him. When Swamiji came back from America I hesitated to approach him, because he had received such worship in the West. Swamiji took me by the

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[8] *Ibid.*, p. 197.

[9] Translation of a Sanskrit hymn composed by Swami Ramakrishnananda on January 28, 1911. (vide *The Story of a Dedicated Life*, second edition,p. 139).

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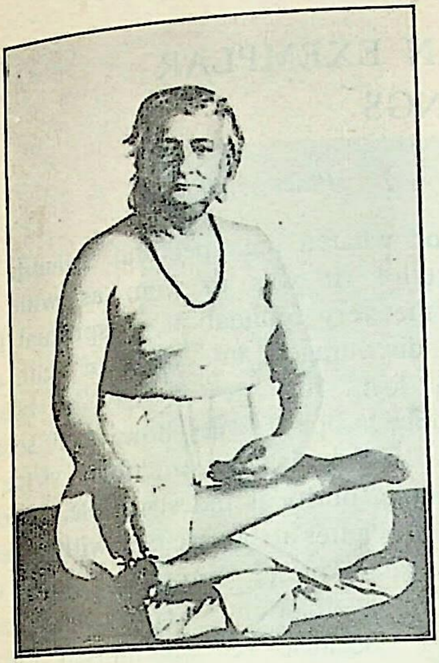

SWAMI AKHANDANANDA

hand, and said, 'I am still the same Naren and you are that same Leto. What you see is all the will of the Lord. It is the play of the Lord's power.'... Only through the meritorious deeds of many past births can one get a Vivekananda as a brother disciple. The Master asked him to look after the rest of us and what did he not do for us? Yes, I worship Vivekananda.[10]

SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA.

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Swamiji was an embodiment of principles. He was not like ordinary men, a compact of flesh and blood — he was ideas personified. His patriotism was not as is usually understood in the West. His was the identification of the Self with the country.

With the auspicious advent of Swamiji, the patriot-saint, a new age has been ushered in and the horizon of India has been flooded with the rays of the sun of the religion of service, so ardently cherished by him.[11]

SWAMI AKHANDANANDA.

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Swamiji's lectures had a special feature. While speaking he used to forget himself and would become an entirely different person. His speeches turned the core of people's hearts. I have myself seen in Belur Math distinguished Western disciples of Swamiji squatting on the floor all round his chair and drinking in his inspired words. And how forcefully did he speak! Now things are being done according to what he said and people are getting inspiration from his words.[12] At the Belur Math, I recall, one night Swamiji was pacing up and down the verandah singing to himself, 'Thou art the saviour, Mother.' He repeated this line over and over again. At times I could see him standing motionless in ecstasy with tears of joy running down his cheeks, and so he continued until dawn.[13]

SWAMI VIJNANANANDA.

SWAMI VIJNANANANDA

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[10] *Vedanta and the West*, No. 140, pp. 57-62.

[11] The Vedanta Kesari, 1961-62, p. 488. and *Swami Akhandananda* by Swami Annadananda.

[12] *Vedanta and the West*

[13] *Prabuddha Bharata*, March 1963, p. 85

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA — AN EXEMPLAR OF HIS TEACHINGS

Lives of great spiritual leaders are the best commentaries, the greatest illustrations of their own teachings. In them we find thought, speech and action working in consonance. As a popular Sanskrit verse elegantly puts it, 'the holy ones are one in mind, speech and action'.[1] How simple this definition looks! But what a vast meaning is encompassed in it. As if in a sweep, it includes all the highest virtues man can conceive of. It means the inherence and manifestation of truthfulness, purity, sincerity, unselfishness, unbiased love and a score more of other virtues. It is a staggering list, no doubt, but that is the very reason that there are very rare souls that reach such dizzy heights of spiritual realization, such eminence. Sri Ramakrishna emphasized the need for 'making thought and word perfectly at one' as a discipline even for those who sought God in earnest. Swamiji writes to a disciple in Madras, 'Be holy and pure and the fire will come'. This was the keynote of all his teachings. Coming from Vivekananda these words had tremendous effect. They carried his vigour and enthused puissance into the reader. They were not mere words of encouragement but the products of the faith and conviction born of his own experience. He was never tired of repeating this formula, whether it was in conversations, dialogues or letters, to impress upon his audience the primacy of cultivating these virtues. In one of his letters he remarks, 'Be pure, staunch and sincere to the very backbone, and everything will be all right. If you have marked anything in the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna it is this — they are sincere to the backbone'.[2]

Place of Truth

And on what a high pedestal Swamiji did place truth! It was to him, as with his Master, the very foundation of spiritual life. 'Be not discouraged, one word of truth can never be lost; for ages it may be hidden under rubbish but it will show itself sooner or later. Truth is indestructible, virtue is indestructible, purity is indestructible,'[3] writes Swamiji in a letter to a disciple, with a certitude that can pierce through granite and cleave through all doubts. How was he able to do it? Because he was himself full of truth and nothing but that. Truth was with him a natural possession from his very childhood, and all through his life we see him struggling and fighting for it. One such urge brought him to Sri Ramakrishna and what marvellous effect it has produced in the world of thought and action, both in the East and the West! Yet this is but the beginning.

To get a little extended view of Swamiji's life we shall follow him through his peregrinations, through his travels in the foreign lands and just take an instance or two to learn how passionately attached to truth he was, sometimes at the risk of even estrangement from his best friends. We refer the reader to a letter written to Miss Mary Hale on 1st February, 1895, wherein he mentions about an excited argument he had with a Presbyterian gentleman, 'Who,' he writes 'as usual got very hot, angry and abusive'. He continues, 'I was afterwards severely reprimanded by Mrs. Bull for this, as such things hinder my work. So it seems, is your opinion'. Both of these ladies were his staunchest supporters and well-meaning friends, but where truth was concerned he was no respecter of persons. Let us quote his own

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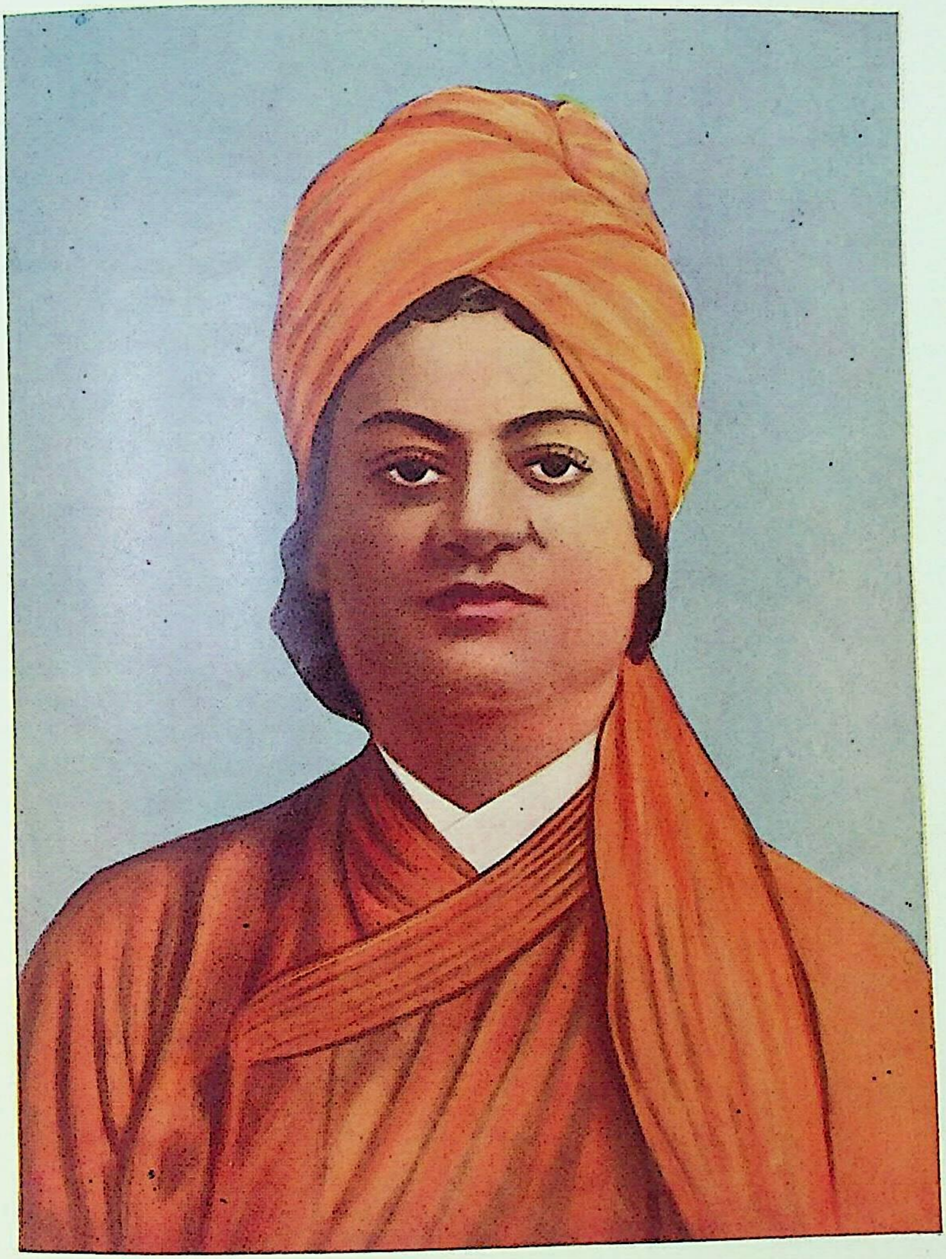
[1] मनस्येकं वचस्येकं कर्मण्येकं महात्मनाम् ।

[2] *Works,* Vol. V, p. 44 Epistles.

[3] *Ibid.*



SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

words, 'I know full well how good it is for one's worldly prospects to be *sweet*. I do everything to be sweet, but when it comes to a horrible compromise with the truth within, I then stop. . . . I believe in Samadarśitvam — same state of mind with regard to all. The duty of the ordinary man is to obey the commands of his "God", society, but the children of light never do so. This is an eternal law. . . . The worshippers of "Vox populi" go to annihilation in a moment — the children of truth *live for ever*.'

It is no doubt true that the path of truth is not strewn with flowers, but a spiritual leader comes not to cater to the whims and fancies of a society and allow it to run to its ruin. He has a mission to fulfil — that of drawing society up towards him. The spiritual leaders know the hollowness of wealth, beauty, name and fame. So they resent and fight falsehood and expose it. They *know* that truth alone triumphs — not believe but *know*. Swamiji compares 'truth to a corrosive substance of infinite power. It burns its way in wherever it falls—in soft substance at once, hard granite slowly, but it must.' Continuing his letter he writes: 'I am so sorry, Sister, that I cannot make myself sweet and accommodating to every black falsehood. But I cannot. I have suffered for it all my life, but I cannot. I have essayed and essayed. But I cannot. At last I have given it up. The Lord is great. . . God of Truth; be Thou alone my guide! . . . What reason is there for me to conform to the vagaries of the world around me and not obey the voice of Truth within?'[4] That is what Swami Vivekananda symbolizes — Truth. Let us not think that after this correspondence either Miss Mary Hale or after the 'fight', as Swamiji calls it, Mrs. Bull, lost any regard, respect or admiration for Swamiji. On the other hand they stood by him till the end. Many were such instances in the life of Swamiji. But he never gave in. His mind instinctively recoiled from untruth.

Unselfishness

Now what did Swamiji mean by 'fire' in the sentence quoted above? It is the fire, the vigour, enthusiasm and energy to plunge undaunted into action, a determination to face all odds or die, for a noble cause. It is the fire of holiness and unselfishness which can achieve wonders. Swamiji declared on another occasion: 'But mind you, this is life's experience: if you really want the good of others, the whole universe may stand against you and cannot hurt you. It must crumble before your power of the Lord Himself in you, if you are sincere and really unselfish.'[5] He urged his followers to be totally unselfish. He used to quote often a Sanskrit verse which runs in the following strain: 'The wise one should give up wealth and even life for the sake of others. When death is certain, it is better to die for a good cause.'[6] For, he said, that is the true way to make best use of our human life. Once when Ingersol said to Swamiji, 'I believe in making the most of the world, in squeezing the orange dry, because this world is all we are sure of.' Swamiji replied: 'I know a better way to squeeze the orange of this world than you do and I get more out of it. . . . I know there is no fear, so I enjoy the squeezing. I have no duty, no bondage of wife and children and property. I can love all men and women. Every one is God to me. Think of the joy of loving man as God! Squeeze your orange this way, and get ten thousand fold more out of it. Get every single drop.'[7]

Mark the words 'believe' used by Ingersol and 'know' used by Swamiji. Whereas the former speaks from the plane of the five senses and is not sure of the outcome, Swamiji is emphatic and certain, having been vouchsafed the vision of the Divine in everything long long before, at the feet of his Master. So the words that came out of his lips were from the innermost core of his being and had the stamp of authority.

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[4] *Ibid.*, p. 56, 57.

[5] *Ibid.*, Vol. VIII, p. 83. 'My Life and Mission.'

[6] घनानि जीवितश्चैव परार्थे प्राज्ञ उत्सृजेत् ।
सन्निमित्ते वरं त्यागो विनाशे नियते सति ॥

[7] *Works*, Vol. VII, p. 75. Inspired Talks.

Another time Swamiji declared: 'To be unselfish, perfectly selfless, is salvation itself for the man within dies, and God alone remains.' Here are the words of a sage, a seer, very clear and unambiguous and at the same time apparently showing an easy path to salvation. But it is to be worked out. Man must be intensely and motivelessly working for others, with not a thought of what will happen to himself. He himeslf did it. One of his American friends remarks: 'He did not seem to be conscious of himself at all. It was the other man who interested him.' Out of the fullness of the heart Swamiji spoke: 'You little know how nothing would be impossible for you in life if you labour day and night for others with your heart's blood!' Again, he prophesies: 'Our best work is done, our greatest influence is exerted, when we are without thought of self.'

Love of humanity

But to be 'unselfish, perfectly selfless' we require a better basis than the mere exercise of the intellect. We should have the heart, the feeling, the love of humanity. Swamiji had it in ample measure and that was what sent him to America, to seek means to ameliorate the condition of the suffering masses of India. He had failed to get any response from the rich of his own country in this direction, and was struggling, as it were, in the jaws of death. He panted for direction from on High and when the anguish reached the climax, the command came. For him religiousness was not making long faces, nor was it looking down on others. 'Love and charity for the whole human race, that is the test of true religiousness,' he stated. Let us not jump to the conclusion that we have this in abundance. Swamiji was aware of this fault of man and warned us against this self-complacency. He observes: 'I do not mean the sentimental statement that all men are brothers, but that one must feel the oneness of human life.' Many are ready to accommodate their brother as long as everything goes their way, as long as the brother does not cross their path. But as soon as their least interest is affected, woe unto the brother! This is not loving humanity. It is pure selfishness masquerading in the form of charity. Swamiji reiterates that no society in any country has come to that excellence 'where the effectiveness of individual self-sacrifice for the good of the many and oneness of purpose and endeavour actuating every member of the society for the common good of the whole has been realized.' Let there be no misgivings about it. It can be done by a few, and the persons on whom God's choice falls must consider themselves blessed. There is no room for pride about it. Swamiji decisively points out: 'All are helped on by nature, and will be so helped even though millions of us were not here. The course of nature will not stop for such as you and me; it is only a blessed privilege to you and to me that we are allowed in the way of helping others, to educate ourselves. . . . So drive out of your mind the idea that you have to do something for the world; the world does not require any help from you. It is sheer nonsense on the part of any man to think that he is born to help the world; it is simply pride, it is selfishness insinuating itself in the form of virtue.'[8] He was himself humble to the end.

An incident in the life of the Swami that occurred at the Belur Math in the year 1901 shows his love for the poor, in a touching way. Some Santal labourers were working at the Math premises then. Swamiji used to visit them and hear their tales of woe. Sometimes tears would come to the Swami's eyes when he heard them and then the narrator would stop his tale, entreat Swamiji to go away. One day while Swamiji was talking with them some people of wealth and position came to see him. When he was told about the visitors, he said 'I shan't be able to go now. I am quite happy with these people.' Another day he arranged to feed them with sweets and delicacies and when they had eaten to their satisfaction, Swamiji turned to a disciple and said, 'I actually saw the Lord Himself in them. How simple-hearted and guileless they are!' And a little later addressing the Sannyasins and Brahmacharis of the Math he observed: 'See how simple-hearted these poor illiterate people are! Can you mitigate their misery a little? If not of what use is your wearing the gerua? . . . Alas! Nobody in our country thinks of the low, the poor and the miserable!' With the knowledge of history of the countries of the East and the West as background he prophetically remarked, 'Unless they (the masses) are raised, this motherland of ours will never awake.' 'You will be free in a moment, if you starve yourself to death by giving to another. If you will be perfect, you will become God,' said he on another occasion.

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[8] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, pp. 87-88

Purity of motive and sincerity of conviction

The motive power to work for humanity comes with renunciation, not merely outer, but inner also. There must not be any ulterior end in view at any time, prior, during or at the end of the work. That is purity of motive. This will not come unless sincere conviction, that the path chosen is sure to lead us to the goal, arises. Incidentally, we may point out, that sincerity of conviction and purity of motive form the groundwork of any other pathway, to spirituality, as well. Swamiji warns: 'Keep away from all insincere claimants to supernatural illumination.' Aye, that is the great hurdle that comes in spiritual life. We like to attain results quickly and without effort. Is it possible? No. But man is man. He knows it is impossible yet runs after the miraculous and the like. But those who are sincere, have the assurance of all the Great Ones, to which Swamiji too joins his voice: 'Truth, purity and unselfishness — wherever these are present, there is no power below or above the sun to crush the possessor thereof.' Is it not a reflection of his own life?

Chastity

'Chastity in thought, word, and deed, always, and in all conditions,' said Swamiji, 'is what is called Brahmacharya.' Than Swamiji there can be no better authority to speak on the value of chastity. He was pure as purity can be. Sri Ramakrishna said of him that he was like a blazing fire. The Master said, 'Maya stood ten steps away from Naren. She could not catch him in her net.' Let us, therefore, hear Swamiji's opinion about this virtue: 'It is only the chaste man or woman who can make the Ojas rise and store it in the brain, that is why chastity has always been considered the highest virtue.' 'Without chastity there can be no spiritual strength. Continence gives wonderful control over mankind. The spiritual leaders of men have been very continent, and this is what gave them power.' Referring to his plan of education he said, 'It is *gurugrihavāsa*, living with the teacher that I would prescribe,' for that meant a life of celibacy. 'Everybody should be trained to practise absolute Brahmacharya and then only faith and shraddha will come. . . . Simply by the observance of strict Brahmacharya (continence) all learning can be mastered in a very short time. One has an unfailing memory of what one hears or knows but once. It is owing to this want of continence that everything is on the brink of ruin in our country,' remarked Swamiji on various occasions. Will the nation heed? It would be the best way of honouring Swamiji if it did. For it is the working out of his ideas, and not his name, that he liked to see.

Swamiji's personality

Commissioned by Divine Providence to preach the gospel of Vedanta, of tolerance, of spirituality he, it is hardly necessary to state, was well-equipped with all these and more. We have seen here, in a few of his teachings that we have discussed, that he never taught anything that he himself had not practised. As in the case of these teachings so too was he an exemplar in the love of god, and other virtues that he asked us to cultivate. This can be observed by anyone who cares to go through his life. We shall now conclude by a reference to the remarks of those, specially from the critical West, who had the opportunity to come in close contact with him.

Swamiji's personality was imposing and impressive. He had a regal bearing and a casual observer would take him to be a Rajah (a Prince). Here is a news item from the *Framingham Tribune*, which has recently been brought to light; it reads :

> Friday, August 25, 1893.
>
> Holliston : Miss Kate Sanborn, who has recently returned from the West, last week entertained the Indian Rajah, Swami Vivekananda. Behind a pair of horses furnished by liveryman F. W. Phipps, Miss Sanborn and the Rajah drove through town on Friday en route for Hunnewell's.[9]

This news item, appearing in a journal of a remote town, has its own importance and significance; and more so when it happens that Swamiji had not yet attained the fame and celebrity, which, after the Parliament of Religions, was his. This proves that his was a personality that could not be hidden.

It is also interesting to note that he left deep, abiding and loving memories with whomsoever he came in contact. Witness Mrs. Wright's letter to her mother which has recently come to light :

> Annisquam, Mass.
> August 29, 1893.
>
> 'Dear Mother,
>
> We have been having a queer time. Kate Sanborn had a Hindoo monk in tow as I believe I mentioned in my last letter. John went down to meet him in Boston and missing him, invited him up here. He came Friday! In a long saffron robe that caused universal amazement. He was a most gorgeous vision. He had a superb carriage of the head, was very handsome in an oriental way, about thirty years old in time, ages in civilization. He stayed until Monday and was one of the most interesting people I have yet come across. We talked all day all night and began again with interest next morning. The town was in a fume to see him; the boarders at Miss Lane's in wild excitement. They were in and out of the Lodge constantly and little Mrs. Merrill's eyes were blazing and her cheeks red with excitement. Chiefly we talked religion. It was a kind of revival, I have not felt so wrought up for a long time myself! Then on Sunday John had him invited to speak in the Church and they took up a collection for a Heathen College to be carried on on strictly heathen principles — whereupon I retired to my corner and laughed until I cried.'[10]

Here are given the circumstances that brought Prof. J. H. Wright and Swamiji together. How this meeting helped Swamiji, to gain entry into the Parliament of Religions as a delegate, is a matter of history too well-known to need repetition. But mark the impression left by Swamiji during that short visit.

We shall now quote from a letter of Ella Wheeler Wilcox, journalist and poet, to Mrs. Kate Tannatt Woods who had sometimes played hostess to Swamiji. Of course this letter is of a later date (May, 1895) but it shows how the correspondent, who was one among the audience of Swamiji, felt about his personality. She writes :

> 'I was listening to Vivekananda this morning an hour. How honoured by fate you must feel to have been allowed to be of service to this Great Soul. I believe him to be the re-incarnation of some great Spirit — perhaps Buddha — perhaps Christ! He is so simple — so sincere, so pure, so unselfish. To have listened to him all winter is the greatest privilege life has ever offered me. It would be surprising to me that people could misunderstand or malign such a soul if I did not know how Buddha and Christ were persecuted and lied about by

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[9] *Swami Vivekananda in America, New Discoveries* by Marie Louise Burke, pub. Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta, page 16.

[10] *Ibid.*, page 20.

small inferiors. His discourse this morning was most uplifting—his mere *presence* is that. His absolute sinking of *self* is what I like.'[11]

How enormously he should have touched the deep chords of their hearts to make them spontaneously pour out their adorations and encomiums on him! What a divine joy should have been brimming in their hearts to make them desire to share it with others! Yet speech is but a poor messenger of the heart. If even that sends a thrill through one's being, how greater should have been the feelings aroused in those hearts! One can feel it only when one comes across such a holy one. As words and descriptions can carry little meaning of what an ocean is, so too these letters convey but a faint echo of the resurrection of those hearts. Perhaps one can imagine it a little. But imageries will fall far far short of the real feeling. The magnitude of the spiritual benefit one can receive by a sight, a touch or communion with such spiritual luminaries is unfathomable. These letters, which form but a fraction of the few that have come to light, are living evidences of the soothing influence, like that of a cool mountain breeze, his sublime life breathed wherever he happened to be; nay even more, wherever his message spread. His life, like those of others of his eminence are verifications of the scriptural statements. These lives reiterate the scriptures and reimburse them with energy and vigour.

Finally let us reproduce from what Miss Sarah Farmer, the founder of the summer School for the Comparative Study of Religions, at Green Acre, wrote to the Vedanta Society of New York about the year 1902, after the passing away of Swamiji:

> 'To know Swami Vivekananda was a renewed consecration; to have him under one's roof was to feel empowered to go forth to the children of men and to help them all to a realization of their birthright as Sons of God. What Green Acre owes to him cannot be put into words. A little band of people had started to prove the providing care of God for those who only rely upon Him in utter faith and love. This great soul came into our midst and did more than any other to give to the work its true tone, for he *lived* every day the truth which his lips proclaimed and was to us the living evidence of the power manifested nineteen hundred years ago, in that he went about his Father's business in perfect joyousness and childlike trust, without "purse or script" and found all promises fulfilled, all needs met. Forever after, as he grew in knowledge and power, his influence increased among us and helped to strengthen our faith, and today his power for good is even greater and will continue to be, if we are true to Him who worketh in us "to will and to do His good pleasure".'[12]

Such then was Swami Vivekananda, an embodiment of the highest virtues he preached.

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[11] *Ibid.*, page 29.

[12] *The Brahmavadin*, January, 1903, pages 56-57.

Experience is the only source of knowledge. In the world, religion is the only science where there is no surety, because it is not taught as a science of experience. This should not be. There is always, however, a small group of men who teach religion from experience. They are called mystics, and these mystics in every religion speak the same tongue and teach the same truth. This is the real science of religion. As mathematics in every part of the world does not differ, so the mystics do not differ. They are all similarly constituted and similarly situated. Their experience is the same; and this becomes law.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

HOMAGE TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

I have come here to pay my homage and respect to the revered memory of Swami Vivekananda, whose birthday is being celebrated today (January 1923). I have gone through his works very thoroughly and after having gone through them, the love that I had for my country became a thousand-fold. I ask you, young men not to go away empty-handed without imbibing something of the spirit of the place where Swami Vivekananda lived and died.

MAHATMA GANDHI.

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The going forth of Vivekananda, marked by the Master as the heroic soul destined to take the world between his two hands and change it, was the first visible sign to the world that India was awake not only to survive but to conquer.

Vivekananda was a soul of puissance, if there was one, a lion among men. We perceive his influence still working gigantically, we know not well how, we know not where, in something that is not yet formed, something lionine, grand, intuitive, upheaving that has entered the soul of India, and we say, 'Behold! Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his motherland, and in the souls of her children'.

SRI AUROBINDO.

* * * * * * *

Vivekananda has said that there is the power of Brahman in every human being; also that it is through the poor and the dispossessed that Narayana seeks and awaits our service. What a grand message! It lights up for man's consciousness the path to limitless liberation from the trammels and limitations of his self. This is not an ethical injunction laying down any specific rule of conduct, no narrow commandment for the regulation of our behaviour. Opposition to untouchability is inherent in the Message — opposition not on any ground of political expediency, but because the Message is incompatible with insult to the humanity of Man, for untouchability is a self-inflicted insult to every one of us.

And because the Message of Vivekananda is a call of awakening to the totality of our Manhood, that it has set so many of our youths on diverse paths to freedom through Work and through Renunciation and Service.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

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Few indeed could comprehend or fathom Vivekananda — even among those who had the privilege of becoming intimate with him. His personality was rich, profound and complex and it was this personality — as distinct from his teachings and writings — which account for the wonderful influence he has exerted on his countrymen and particularly on Bengalees. This is the type of manhood which appeals to the Bengalees as probably as none other. Reckless in his sacrifice, unceasing in his activity, boundless in his love, profound and versatile in his wisdom, exuberant in his emotions, merciless in his attacks, but yet simple as a child — he was a rare personality in this world of ours.

And his love for his downtrodden people! That was ocean-like. Do you remember that message of his 'Say brothers, "The naked Indian, the paraiah Indian is my brother". Say brothers, at the top of your voice, "India's good is my good". And pray day and night, Oh, thou Lord of Gowri, Oh thou Mother of Strength,—take away my weakness, take away my unmanliness and make me a man!'

He took great pains to train his disciples and never attempted to cripple their individuality or curb their free thinking. To this end he would not keep a disciple near him for a long period. He used to say that under the shadow of one big tree another big tree could not possibly grow.

SUBHASH CHANDRA BOSE.

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Swami Vivekananda is one of those leading personages who contributed greatly to the awakening of modern India, while most of his contemporaries made their contribution through political or purely socio-religious work, Swami Vivekananda had the distinction of raising India spiritually in the eyes of the West. His interpretation of Vedanta to which he gave expression during his tour of the United States of America brought home to Western countries the richness of India's cultural heritage. On this occasion we must pay our humble tribute to the memory of that great Indian.

RAJENDRA PRASAD.

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It was impossible to imagine Vivekananda in the second place. Wherever he went he was the first. His pre-eminent characteristic was kingliness. He was a born king and nobody ever came near him either in India or America without paying homage to his majesty. It was in vain that Vivekananda refused to accept such homage, judging himself severely and humiliating himself — everybody recognised in him at sight the leader, the anointed of God, the man marked with the stamp of the power to command. A traveller who crossed his path in the Himalayas without knowing who he was, stopped in amazement, and cried 'Shiva'. . . . It was as if his chosen God had imprinted His name upon his forehead.

He was less than forty years of age when he lay stretched upon the pyre. But the flame of that pyre is still alight today. From his ashes, like those of the Phoenix of old, has sprung anew the conscience of India — the magic bird — faith in her unity and in the Great Message, brooded over from Vedic Times by the drawing spirit of his ancient race — the message for which it must render account to the rest of mankind.

ROMAIN ROLLAND.

॥ श्रीः ॥

नरेन्द्रो विवेकानन्दः

डाक्टर् वे. राघवः

VIVEKANANDA THE FOREMOST AMONG MEN

V. RAGHAVAN

[Dr V. Raghavan, M.A., Ph.D. is a great scholar and Head of the Sanskrit Department, University of Madras, and used to contribute articles to the *Vedanta Kesari* in the past. Here is his homage to Swami Vivekananda on the occasion of his birth centenary. — *Ed.*]

यो रामकृष्णपरमहंसदयादृगिद्ध-
तेजाः, ततार लघु मारुतिवत्समुद्रान् ।
द्वीपान्तरेषु विषयग्रहवेगशान्त-
मध्यात्मदीपमुददीपयदार्षदीप्त्या ॥१॥

1. Reinforced in his powers by the grace of the look of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, he who, like Hanuman, lightly crossed the Seas; lighted in the far off continents, with the light of the Rishis, the spiritual lamp that had been blown off by the force of obsession of materialistic values.

[१]आरण्यभूमिषु यथेच्छविहारशाली
वेदान्तसिंह उरुविक्रमलङ्घिताशः ।
[२]गर्जत्विति स्वयमगर्जदभीर्नृसिंहो
यो ज्ञानमौपनिषदं प्रथयन् पृथिव्याम् ॥२॥

2. 'Roaming freely in the forests of the Upaniṣads, let the Lion of Vedanta, which with its powerful movement, has encompassed all directions; roar!', — himself a lion among men, he who thus fearlessly roared, spreading the Upaniṣadic Knowledge over the world.

विघ्नानिवोर्मिविततीस्तरसा तरन् स्व-
मध्यास्य धैर्यमिव [३]पर्वतखण्डमब्धौ ।
[४]कन्यापदे धृतसमाधिरवाप यश्च
दृष्टिं पुनर्भवकृते जगदात्मशक्तेः ॥३॥

3. Crossing quickly over the waves, as if the obstacles on his way, and taking his stand on the rock in the Sea, as it were on his own courage, he who, at the place (feet) of Kanya Kumari, sat in contemplation and obtained the vision for the regeneration of the spiritual force of the world.

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[१] आरण्यशब्देन वनम्, आरण्यकाख्यः सवेदान्तो वेदभागश्चेति द्वयमप्यभिमतं भवति । भूमिशब्देन प्रदेशसामान्य योगभूमयश्च ।

[२] 'Let the Lion of Vedanta roar!' इति प्रसिद्ध आघोषो विवेकानन्दस्य ।

[३] The 'Vivekananda Rock'.

[४] कन्याकुमारीस्थले, तस्या देव्याः चरणे च ।

1963

तत्रोपविश्य पुरतो विततामखण्डा-
माकन्यमातुहिनशैलमपश्यदेकाम् ।
यो [५]भारतीं भुवमनश्वरसंस्कृतिं ता-
[६]मावामदेवनिजदेशिकरामकृष्णम् ॥४॥

सुप्ताःस्थ किं भरतपुण्यभुवीह जाताः
किं दुर्बलाश्च कृपणाश्च निरुद्यमाश्च ।
[७]उत्तिष्ठतोच्चलत जाग्रत लब्धलक्ष्या
यावन्न मा विरमतेति च यो जुघोष ॥५॥

आत्मैष नैव [८]बलहीनजनेन लभ्य
इत्यागमोक्तमवधत्त निरुद्यमानाम् ।
[९]लोकोऽस्ति नैष न परोऽप्यविषादयोगं
यः [१०]पार्थसारथिरिवेत्थमबोधयन्नः ॥६॥

क्वोक्तिः 'ततो न विजुगुप्सत' इत्युदारा
[११]क्वास्पृश्यतामयमतं बत हास्यमेतत् ।
[१२]पूजालयेषु च कथं विपुला दरिद्र-
नारायणेषु विचरत्सु निरन्नवस्त्रम् ॥७॥

बाह्यप्रपञ्चनविडम्बनडम्बरादि-
पांसुप्रपाततृणरोहखिलीकृतं नः ।
वेदान्तमान्तरमिहोद्धरतेत्युदीर्य
संदेशमस्य परमं भुवि यो व्यतानीत् ॥८॥

4. Seated there, he who saw, spread wide before, from Kanya to the Himalayas, the one unbroken Bharata land and Bharata culture, continuing undying from Sage Vamadeva (of the Rigveda) to his own Guru, Ramakrishna.

5, 6. He who exhorted, 'You sons born in this sacred land of Bharata! Why are you asleep? Why are you weak, wretched and without initiative? Arise, move on, awake, and as long as you have not obtained your goal, stop not —

"This Self cannot be realized by one devoid of strength" — remember this saying of the Upaniṣad; 'for those devoid of effort, there is neither this world nor the other', — he who taught us this yoga of freedom from depression like the Lord at the helm of Arjuna's chariot.

7. Where is that grand utterance (of the Upaniṣads) that 'one does not thereafter loathe anything'? and where is this present ridiculous religion full of the disease of touch-me-notism? How all this elaborate service in the temples when, without food or cloth, the 'Daridra Narayanas' are wandering on the streets!

8. 'Resuscitate our real Vedanta here, which had been lost by the gathering of the dust and the weedy overgrowth of external, material elaborations and show' — Exhorting thus, he who spread the supreme message of the Vedanta in the world.

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[५] भारतीमिति भुवमित्यनेन संस्कृतिमित्यनेन चान्वयः ।

[६] वामदेवः प्रसिद्धो वेदर्षिर्मन्त्रद्रष्टा ।

[७] 'उत्तिष्ठत जाग्रत' इत्युपनिषदुक्तिमनु 'Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached' इति प्रसिद्धा विवेकानन्दस्य उक्तिः ।

[८] 'नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्य' इति मुहुरुदाहृतं तेन औपनिषदं वाक्यम् ।

[९] गीता. ४. ४०.

[१०] पार्थसारथिनिर्देशात् तदालयपवित्रितस्थलनिकटवर्तिनि 'Ice House' नाम्नि प्रासादे कैरविण्यां (Triplicane) विवेकानन्दस्य वासः सूचितो भवति ।

[११] 'Touch-me-notism', इति विवेकानन्देन प्रहसितम् । अस्पृश्यतामयं मतं, तद्रूपं आमयभूतं मतमिति उभयथा योगः ।

[१२] 'दरिद्रनारायण' शब्दश्च तेनैव दीनजनेषु तदुद्धारप्रोत्साहनार्थं प्रयुक्तः ।

मठाश्रमाः शिष्यसङ्घाः [१३] आत्मबोधजगद्धिते ।
दीक्षिता विश्वतो भान्ति यत्प्रेक्षायाः फलायिताः ॥९॥

9. 'For self-enlightenment and world-welfare'—with this as their dedicated mission, he whose Maths, Ashramas and pupils are flourishing all over the world, verily like the fruits of his farsight.

य श्रीशङ्करवत् मिता अपि समाः
प्राप्येह झञ्झामरु-
तुल्यस्तोलयति स्म विश्वम्, अखिलान्
व्यस्मापयद् वाग्झरैः ।
वेदान्तं पुनरुद्धार जनतास्वाध्यात्मिकीं वासनां
तस्यैतस्य धृतेऽपि नामनि शुभे को वा न
रोमाञ्चति ॥१०॥

10. He, who, like Sri Śankara himself, with only a few years of life here, shook the world like a tempest, and making everybody wonder-struck with his torrential eloquence, resurrected Vedanta again and thereby the spiritual sense in the people,—who will not thrill at the very utterance of his auspicious and shining name?

ज्ञानवीरः कर्मवीरो [१४] राष्ट्रवीरश्च यो बभौ ।
तस्याधमर्णाः कतिधा न भवामोऽत्र भारते ॥११॥

11. He, who shone as a hero of Knowledge, a hero of action, a hero of the country (as patriot-monk), in how many ways are we not in debt to him in this land?

जातो नरेन्द्रो यः [१५] ख्यात्या विवेकानन्दतां गतः ।
नरेन्द्राः स्याम [१६] तत्स्मृत्या विवेकानन्द-
लाभतः ॥१२॥

12. He, who was born as Narendra and by his realization (renown) became Vivekananda, by his thoughts now (on the occasion of his Centenary), may we become foremost men with the acquisition of the bliss of discriminate knowledge!

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[१३] "आत्मनो मोक्षार्थं जगद्धिताय च". इति श्रीरामकृष्णमठसंघयो: (Mission) लक्ष्यवाक्यं (motto) तेनैव दत्तम् ।

[१४] स्वप्रकटदेशभक्त्या यः 'Patriot Monk' इत्याहूत आसित् ।

[१५] प्रसिद्ध्या ज्ञानेन च ।

[१६] तज्जन्मशताब्दीमहोत्सव इति वाक्यशेषः ।

Religion is not, and never can be, in the field of intellect. Intellectual reasoning is based on facts evident to the senses. Now religion has nothing to do with the senses.... All great prophets and seers claim to have 'seen God'. That is to say, they have had direct experience. There is no knowledge without experience, and man has to see God in his own soul. When man has come face to face with the one great fact in the universe, then alone will doubts vanish and crooked things become straight. This is 'seeing God'. Our business is to verify, not to swallow. Religion, like other sciences, requires you to gather facts, to see for yourself, and this is possible when you go beyond the knowledge which lies in the region of the five senses. Religious truths need verification by everyone.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SO-CALLED CONTRADICTIONS IN SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S TEACHINGS

SWAMI ŚUDDHANANDA

[Swami Suddhananda, a disciple of Swamiji, joined the Order soon after Swamiji's return from the West (in 1897). He was not only loved by Swamiji but had faith in his capacity to work out his ideas, and therefore Swamiji entrusted him with works of utmost importance. Swami Suddhananda lived with Swamiji for a long time, and imbibed Swamiji's message and ideas; as such his understanding of them is of great value for us today. He was the second General Secretary of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission and its fifth President. This article is reproduced from *Prabuddha Bharata,* January, 1931. — *Ed.*]

In the pregnant words with which Swamiji begins his book, *Raja-Yoga,* breathing a most catholic and all-embracing spirit, the Swami Vivekananda has put forth his ideas about the methods of individual spiritual culture for all mankind. These sentences came out spontaneously in course of the explanation of an aphorism of Patanjali, incorporated in his monumental work on Raja-Yoga, and they apparently appealed so much to the Swamiji himself that he placed them as the motto of his book called *Raja-Yoga.* His four books on the four Yogas, viz., *Jnana-Yoga, Raja-Yoga, Karma-Yoga* and *Bhakti-Yoga,* into which he wanted to roughly classify the different methods of spiritual culture, are but the amplification of the above sentences, giving emphasis to each, when that was dealt separately.

This is, in short, what may be termed Swamiji's scheme of individual salvation; but besides the above four books many epistles of Swamiji, some at least of which he never intended for publication, and many interviews with different individuals have been published and recorded, as also many public lectures addressed to vast gatherings, specially of his own country-men, in which we find here and there instructions for individual spiritual culture, but mainly his ideas of collective advancement, social uplift, national regeneration and so forth. The latter class of books are much more widely read by the general public, and through that reading they form an estimate of what Swamiji wanted for the world in general, and for his country in particular. Especially his idea of the Seva of Narayana in different human forms, has caught the imagination of his countrymen and it is the mainspring of many charitable and educational organizations under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Mission and of other bodies. Many of the suggestions put forth in the above-mentioned writings have not as yet been attempted to be translated into action by any individual or organization, though we hope, as time rolls on, attention will be drawn also to those aspects of Swamiji's teachings and big institutions will spring forth from them. The mainspring has given rise to innumerable diversified currents and sometimes perhaps it is difficult to recognize their original source. It is difficult, for instance, for many to find out, whether Swamiji was a champion of orthodoxy or social reform; whether he was a staunch advocate of political freedom — whether he was a nationalist or an internationalist; whether he was an advocate of the caste system or against it; whether he was a supporter of vegetarianism or meat-eating; whether he advised meditation in solitude or work in the bustle of society as the best method of realizing God; whether he favoured organization, or wanted individual spiritual culture in preference to any organization, etc., etc. As one traverses the pages of the big seven * volumes of his works, one is rather apt to be puzzled.

We, who had the good fortune to be in close touch with Swamiji, — from 1897, the date of his triumphant entry into Calcutta, his birth-place, after his spiritual conquest in the West, to 1902, the date of the giving up of his physical frame, — had also occasions to be puzzled by his apparently contradictory teachings, but Swamiji himself supplied us with the key to his proper understanding. There were also many who did not even hesitate to affirm that his teachings were against those of his revered Master, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa.

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* Now in eight volumes.—Ed.

I will quote here several utterances of Swamiji and describe several incidents from his life, which will probably help the reader to find out the master-key to all the apparently contradictory teachings of the great Swami. The one conclusion to which I have arrived regarding them is that they are all of them true under different circumstances, as being addressed to different individuals or groups of individuals; their difference lies only in emphasis laid on particular occasions on particular ideas or courses of action.

I will try to record the different incidents, not in any systematic order, but as they come to my mind.

It was the month of May of 1897. I had joined the Alambazar Math only a few days before. Swamiji had just returned from Darjeeling where he had gone with some of his Gurubhais and Madrasi disciples. In the monastery then lived only three or four senior Swamis — his Gurubhais, and about a dozen newly initiated junior Swamis and Brahmacharins. Up to that time there was no hard and fast rule of discipline in the Math. His Gurubhais were perfectly free and they practised *sādhana* individually or jointly as the spirit prompted them. But now some new elements were admitted and one of the junior Swamis, an old person, suggested to Swamiji that it would be good if he framed some rules and regulations for the training and discipline of the new-comers, before he departed for Almora. Swamiji at once consented and calling all the members to the parlour of the monastery dictated a few rules as to meditation, study, work, physical exercise, etc. But before he dictated those rules, he prefaced them with a short lecture to the following effect:

'Our aim is to go beyond all laws — beyond all rules and regulations. That is the idea — specially of a Sannyasin. Still I remember a pregnant saying of our Master: "If you are pricked by a thorn, it is advised that another thorn should be secured with which you will try to extricate the former. But as soon as it has been done, there is no necessity to keep the thorn you have procured. You may throw away both as you have got rid of the trouble." Similar is the scope and necessity of rules and regulations. You have to go beyond all laws — beyond all rules and regulations. You are Ātman — ever free, blessed and eternal; you are to live a spontaneous life, urged by the perfect freedom and the purity of spirit. But, my children, unfortunately you are at present under some bad laws — bad rules and regulations of your life; you are under the sway of some bad habits. In order to extricate yourself from your evil nature — this thorn of bad laws — let there be framed some good laws for the present; but always remember that you are ultimately to go beyond them both.'

* * *

A few months after, about the end of 1897, Swamiji was travelling in Rajputana with a few of his Sannyasi and Brahmachari disciples. With the exception of one or two, none had any objection to meat-eating. We were the guests of the Raja of Khetri (about 90 miles from Jeypore) at his Jeypore house. The Raja who was then at Khetri had made all arrangements for Swamiji and his disciples through his men. Of course, meat diet was arranged for Swamiji himself. When the Raja's men asked Swamiji as to what kind of food was to be arranged for his disciples, he at once replied that they were all vegetarians. So all the disciples were obliged to take vegetarian diet while at Jeypore. One of the Brahmacharins, who was older than the others, and being fortunate enough to see Sri Ramakrishna himself and being acquainted with his direct disciples for a long time used to take liberties with Swamiji, who, however, instead of being offended thereby rather enjoyed them playfully, requested Swamiji that he be pleased to allow them meat diet at least twice a week. Swamiji was inexorable and did not change the routine. He, however, occasionally called that Brahmacharin and also another to partake of his Prasad consisting of meat. At Khetri the rule was relaxed. But one Brahmacharin who was a vegetarian for a long time past, never broke his vow of not taking meat, and Swamiji one day praised him with the remark that if he could stick to that vow for twelve years continually he would become perfect — a Siddha.

* * *

It was more than a year since Swamiji had returned from the West for the first time. It was the beginning of the year 1898. The monastery had been removed from Alambazar to Belur and was situated at the commodious rented house belonging then to the late Babu Nilambar Mukherji of Kashmir fame. The present site of the permanent monastery had just been purchased. After the return of Swamiji from the West, the life of the monastery had undergone some revolutionary changes. New ideas had been introduced, and new sorts of activities had been initiated as the outcome of Swamiji's Western experience. The old ideas of Pujas and festivals were, as it were, in the melting pot.

It was the Shivaratri day — dedicated to fast and the worship of Shiva and vigil in the night. In the olden days, the monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna observed this occasion with special Pujas, music and enthusiastic Sankirtan throughout the whole day and night. But this year none — neither the old Swamis nor the new Brahmachari and Sannyasi disciples — had fasted, and everyone had come to partake of Prasad at the call of bell. A young Brahmin Brahmacharin was a little late. In the meantime Swamiji suddenly remembered that this was the holy Shivaratri day and noticed also that none had fasted. He had begun to talk about the matter, when the above mentioned Brahmacharin appeared there and was going to sit with the others to partake prasad, but Swamiji intervened and asked, 'Are you accustomed to fast, my child?' 'Yes, holy Swami,' replied he. 'Then, observe Shivaratri. Of course, you need not fast totally, you may partake of some fruit Prasad, if there is any and you need not also keep vigil for the whole night. You may partake of your meals after midnight, when you have finished the first two Pujas (one at 9 p.m. and the other at 12 p.m.).' The Brahmacharin obeyed his Master's directions and was assisted only by another Brahmacharin who though himself unable to fast on account of poor health, helped him in the Puja and kept the vigil up to midnight.

* * *

A young man joined the monastery and lived with Swamiji for a considerable period at the newly constructed Belur Math. His devotional side was then not much developed. He happened to halt at Benares for a few days on his journey further up. It was the year 1900. The Benares Home of Service was then just started by a few ardent young men who at that time read much of Swamiji's teachings but did not come into intimate personal contact with him. They were very much impressed by Swamiji's exhortations about the service of poor 'Narayanas' and started the institution which was then known as 'Poor Men's Relief Association' with the help of a few kind friends. They all naturally asked the newcomer as to Swamiji's real views about the respective merits of the different paths of realization when the latter gave out the following: 'Swamiji's real views are that image-worship and such other things are absolutely useless and Jiva-seva is the only method of attaining to the highest.' Most of them were very much pleased as it tallied perfectly with their activities at that time. One of them, however, who was of a devotional and rather vacillating temperament, was not perfectly satisfied; he put the same question to another monk, who happened to be at Benares on a short visit sometime after the other had come, and who had lived a longer period with Swamiji and was of a rather liberal outlook having known varying forms of religious practices such as Yoga, Bhakti, etc. The monk answered, 'I have found Swamiji advocating different kinds of religious practices for different natures — such as Yoga, Jñāna, Bhakti and Karma.' At this the Benares workers divulged to the new Swami what the other represented as the Swamiji's views. Some time after, both these Swamis who represented Swamiji's views to the Benares boys were sitting in a question class held at the Belur Math with Swamiji himself as the teacher to solve the doubts of his disciples. Swamiji was expressing himself in a liberal strain, saying that all paths — whether Yoga, Bhakti, Jñāna or Karma, led to the same goal. The Swami with the liberal outlook remembered the Benares incident and being encouraged by Swamiji's utterances thought of administering a rebuke by Swamiji himself to the other Swami, who, he thought, totally misrepresented his real views to the Benares boys. He said to Swamiji, 'Swamiji, this Swami has told the Benares workers that you hold the view that image-worship and such other things are absolutely useless and that it is Jiva-Seva alone which leads to the highest goal.' He was sure that Swamiji would reproach the other Swami with misrepresenting his views, but he was totally disappointed. Swamiji did not directly answer him; he rather said aside, 'At present one must, of course, give stress on Karma,' and did not say anything further on the matter.

* * *

Swamiji, some of his Gurubhais and some newly initiated Sannyasins and Brahmacharins were sitting in the visitor's room in the Belur Math. One of his Gurubhais asked Swamiji: 'Swamiji, your sayings and teachings contain so many apparently contradictory things that these youngmen are often at a loss to understand what to do or what not to do.' Swamiji, not replying directly to his Gurubhai, said to the disciples present: 'You see, my children, I am a religious preacher. So I have to say different things to different persons according as the occasion arises. Why should you feel yourself obliged to act according to all my different instructions? Do you not see, my Gurubhais do not always follow me, though I tell them many things? Whenever anyone of you feel puzzled as to how to act on a particular occasion or need guidance in your personal spiritual culture, come to me in private and ask my opinion and advice.'

* * *

A short time before Swamiji's passing away he received a letter from a young Swami, who was then away from the Math practising Tapasya, that he had been written by the head of a certain centre of the Order to the effect that Swamiji had ordered him to join the centre immediately as a worker. But as he had an ardent desire to visit Amarnath in Kashmir he wanted permission for that. If Swamiji, however, so desired, he was quite ready to obey him and join the centre immediately as ordered. Swamiji at once instructed a member of the Math to write to him as well as the head of the centre referred to. The Swami, who had desired to visit Amarnath was told that Swamiji never ordered anyone to do any work, so he might visit Amarnath and also make pilgrimage to any other holy place he liked; and afterwards if he felt so inclined he might go to the centre as a worker. And the head of the centre was informed that he had totally misrepresented Swamiji by using his name in the matter and writing to the young Swami that he was ordered to join the centre immediately. The Swami in question, visiting Amarnath as also some other holy places, joined that centre shortly after as a worker and served it very usefully for about four years.

(To be continued)

THREE MOMENTOUS DECISIONS

SWAMI KAILASANANDA

[Swami Kailasananda, President, Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Madras, in this brief article takes us, when we are celebrating Swamiji's birth centenary, to the source, the ocean, viz. Sri Ramakrishna which set forth on the world the tidal wave of spirituality in the form of Swami Vivekananda. — *Ed.*]

जन्म कर्म च मे दिव्यं एवं यो वेत्ति तत्त्वतः ।
त्यक्त्वा देहं पुनर्जन्म नैति मामेति सोऽर्जुन ॥

"He who thus knows, in true light, My divine birth and action, leaving the body, is not born again; he attains to Me, O Arjuna."

Gita, IV, 9.

The birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda has sent a thrill of joy, admiration and reflection all over the country and even abroad. Expected and unexpected quarters are organizing celebrations and commemorating the event in all possible ways. Doubtless this will conduce to the welfare of humanity at large.

On further reflection one may wonder, if behind this round of celebrations there are not the three momentous decisions or resolutions, which though apparently innocent, are of far reaching consequence to all thoughtful persons, at the present moment. The three decisions were made by Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda — the trinity of the Ramakrishna Order — who along with the galaxy of Apostles headed by Swami Brahmananda, endearingly called Sri Sri Maharaj have indeed ushered in a new age of history. We shall note them one by one below.

1. Sri Ramakrishna, then known as Gadadhar or endearingly called Gadai, decided not to prosecute his academic studies further at the Chatuspathi or the Sanskrit School started by his revered eldest brother, Sri Ramakumar, at Jhamapukur, a suburb of Calcutta, for improving the material prospects of the family. The diminishing returns of income of the family were threatening Ramakumar, the eldest male member of the family; but when he asked Gadadhar with all solicitousness to be diligent in his studies for the sake of all the near and dear ones left behind at Kamarpukur, he was confused with the strange reply he received: 'What shall I do with this bread-winning education, Brother? I will rather go in for that education which will illumine my heart for ever and give me everlasting peace and bliss of mind. I have no interest in this system of education.' We do not know what reaction this reply had on Ramakumar's mind. However, the subsequent history of Sri Ramakrishna's life, as the world knows, shows how faithfully he carried out this resolution, for his personal enlightenment as well as for the edification of humanity.

2. The second great decision was that of Sri Sarada Devi, the Holy Mother, — the decision to live the life of a nun, which was given out when she was asked by Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar in 1872, as to her plan of life. She was eighteen then. 'Do you want to drag me down into Māyā? I have already given my heart and soul to the Divine Mother. But I don't question your just claims on me,' said Sri Ramakrishna to the Holy Mother once, during her first visit to Dakshineswar, — a meeting that occurred after a long period of separation. 'Why should I do that?' came the unhesitating reply, 'I have come only to help you in the path of religious life. It will be enough if I am permitted to serve you in my humble way.'

This was a reply which one of immaculate purity of mind alone could spontaneously give to her adored husband. How the Holy Mother served the Master till the moment of his passing away and helped him to carry on his mission, while she looked so solicitously after his body and how also she fulfilled the mission of Sri Ramakrishna till the last day of her own life, are facts known to the readers of their biographies. It is true that she is still serving Sri Ramakrishna and his mission though in a subtle way. Suffice it to say that this act of decision, so significant to mankind, is unparalleled in the history of the world.

3. Narendranath, the future Swami Vivekananda decided to become a Sannyasin in 1884. It may be interesting to note how even earlier as he would fall asleep two strikingly dissimilar visions of life would appear before his mind's eye: one the life of *preyas*, the worldly life of comfort, ease, luxury and enjoyment of the senses in the right royal style, and the other the picture of the Sannyasin, wandering resourceless, with Almighty as the only resource, eating such food as chance might bring; resting at night, — as he himself wrote in his masterly poem, 'The Song of the Sannyasin', — under the canopy of the sky in the forest or on the mountainside. However, the further inward he would delve, the worldly ideal would fade. At length his choice was Sannyas — the renunciation of desire — as the only way to gain the vision of God. It is a matter of common knowledge now, how this Lion among men afterwards became a Prince of Sannyasins bearing t unforgettable name Swami Vivekananda a shed lustre on the very principle of Sannya Of course in his decision to renounce received substantial help from Sri Rama krishna. And his renouncing had a treme dous value in more than one way. One which was that he brought about a re-orient tion of Sannyas for the uplift of the mass बहुजनहिताय बहुजनसुखाय, which fact is kno all the world over.

The philosophy of Avatāravāda is diffi of comprehension. In the Incarnations o notices a mysterious blending of the hum and the divine aspects. The famous poe remarks: 'Who can know the minds of Supe human Souls, harder than diamond but soft than flower?'* are too true of Avat Bhagavan Śri Krishna has himself s 'Nobody knows me'. मां तु वेद न कश्च The ordinary man has not the asset, spirit and intellectual, to appraise an Avatar c rectly. His conventional yardstick of inte gence does not go far. As it is difficult understand the spiritual or divine aspect of Incarnation, an humble attempt has been m here to contemplate on one out of the inn merable points of approach to the Avata human aspect, which, it is hoped, may g some wholesome food for reflection to th who will choose to have it.

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*वज्रादपि कठोराणि मृदूनि कुसुमादपि
लोकोत्तराणां चेतांसि को नु विज्ञातुमर्हति।

Prophets preach, but the Incarnations like Jesus, Buddha, Ramakrishna, can give religion; one glance, one touch is enough. That is the power of the Holy Ghost, the 'laying on of hands'; the power was actually transmitted to the disciples by the Master — the 'chain of Guru power'. That, the real baptism, has been handed down for untold ages.

Get the mercy of God and of His greatest children; these are the two chief ways to God. The company of these children of light is very hard to get; five minutes in their company will change a whole life, and if you really want it enough, one will come to you.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

BHUVANESHWARI DEVI
(Swami Vivekananda's Mother)

"My Mother fasted and prayed for years and years that I would be born."

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

At the Parliament of Religions, Chicago.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE COMMON MAN OF INDIA

SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

[Swami Nikhilananda is Head of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York. As the translator of the Bengali book *Kathamrita*, into English titled the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, he is widely known. He has also translated the important Upanishads and the Bhagavad Gita with copious notes into English. In this thought-provoking article he deals with Swamiji's love for the common man of India and feelingly depicts how, still, the common men in India, compared with those of other Western countries, specially those of Russia, are in a sorry plight and need our immediate attention. —*Ed.*]

One hundred years ago a great soul assumed a human body and dedicated himself to the proposition that every man is potentially divine and that the goal of evolution is to manifest this divinity. Swami Vivekananda's devotees and admirers all over the world are dedicating the centenary of his birth in many befitting ways. But can we really dedicate an occasion already sanctified by his own dedication to the noblest ideal ever conceived by the human mind? Is it in our power to add to its sanctity by our words or deeds? It would rather be proper for us to dedicate ourselves to carrying out the mission for which he worked, lived, and died. What we say or write during this centenary year will in course of time be forgotten. But the ideal that Swami Vivekananda bequeathed to future generations will, for centuries to come, give people everywhere an impetus to dedicate themselves to the attainment of self-knowledge through service to humanity in whatever area it is needed : material, intellectual, or spiritual.

The *Bhagavad Gītā* teaches that God is born as a man whenever there is a decline of religion and a triumph of wickedness. The God-man resuscitates spiritual values for the preservation of society. Religion was at a low ebb during the nineteenth century and materialistic ideas prevailed. This gave the signal for the advent of Sri Ramakrishna, who chose Swami Vivekananda as his chief instrument to fulfil his world mission.

What are the symptoms of the present world malady? Science and technology, developed especially in the West during the last three centuries, and more importantly, the mind that works behind them, have obscured people's vision concerning the reality of God or Cosmic Intelligence and the true nature of the soul and the universe. They are unaware of the spiritual basis of love and sympathy, which bind together the diverse temperaments in a society, and of the validity of the different faiths as ways to discover the eternal relationship between the eternal soul and the eternal Godhead. As a result, the scientifically oriented mind does not accept the reality of anything which is not perceived by the sense organs and demonstrated by reason based on the data supplied by them. Science gives a purely materialistic interpretation of the universe and of man, who, in its view, has been produced by the blind method of evolution, through adaptation to environment and natural selection and is without any spiritual future. Consequently life in society is motivated by competition, which at its best is enlightened self-interest and, at its worst, crass selfishness. Fear, ill-will, suspicion, and hatred are poisoning human relationships everywhere. Man is not at peace with himself, with his fellow beings, with the universe, or with his Creator. A new world war, controlled by science and technology, will leave hardly a single human soul to enjoy their fruits. The world malady, in short, is a spiritual one. Economic maladjustment, political unrest, and moral confusion are only its outer symptoms.

Again, religion generally claims the exclusive right of conferring salvation, and has become cluttered with superstitions. Teachings of ministers and priests are often too dogmatic and narrow to satisfy man's heart and soul, driving rational seekers to agnosticism, atheism, or scientific humanism.

To combat these evils, Swami Vivekananda preached the timeless truths of Vedanta, which he verified by his own experiences : the reality of God, the solidarity of man, the oneness of existence, and the harmony of religions. He showed men how to integrate the conclusions of human knowledge — scientific, philosophical, and religious — all of which open on the horizon of the Infinite and Eternal. He also demonstrated how the disciplines of intellect, work, love, and self-control can, each of them or all together, bring out the hidden divinity of man.

Swami Vivekananda's mission was both national and international; it was world-wide. His sensitive heart bled at the sight of suffering everywhere. Misery in any form bruised his soul. But he chose as his special task the uplift of Indian humanity. An India free from bondage and misery would help other countries to become truly free. In this article I propose to deal with Swami Vivekananda's Indian mission.

The plight of India's Common Man.

For six years following Sri Ramakrishna's death, Swami Vivekananda travelled as a wandering monk throughout India, from the snow-clad Himalayas to Cape Comorin — often on foot, sometimes living in palaces with Maharajas, sometimes discussing the scriptures and philosophy with erudite scholars, and sometimes sharing meagre meals and lodgings with the poor and lowly, but always particular about the practice of spiritual disciplines. At this time he was perhaps not quite sure of the central purpose of his life. Naturally the desire often flashed in his mind to strive for personal salvation, following the traditional disciplines of meditation, solitude, and the practice of austerities. But somehow the idea did not strike a response from his deepest soul. Then he remembered the admonition of Sri Ramakrishna to forego the joy of personal salvation and dedicate himself to the servi of humanity. He must act as a large stea ship to carry weary souls across the pa fraught ocean of the world to the other sho of freedom and joy.

The pitiable condition of India's comm man, descended from the great seers a saints, who had once walked free with he up-raised, touched Swami Vivekananda deep He saw how, as a result of the exploitation ruthless foreign rulers, powerful landlords, a selfish priests, his very soul was crushed ignorance, illness, and poverty. But the Swa also remembered the great service render by the priests in preserving Hinduism und the most trying circumstances during t foreign domination of India. The priests Hindu temples are, by and large, in a pitia condition at the present time on account ignorance and poverty. But when their ec nomic condition improves and when they properly trained about their duties, they discharge them with dignity and understand The priests and ministers in the Catholic Protestant churches assume their offices after being trained. As long as rituals rem an integral part of religion, the office of pri cannot be abolished.

Swami Vivekananda was amazed to fi that, notwithstanding persecution and povert the Indian masses were patient, gentle, God-fearing. Many years later Maha Gandhi felt the same way when he said: 'I have travelled from one end of the country the other and I have seen miserable specim of humanity with their lustreless eyes. Th are India. In these humble cottages in t midst of these dungheaps are to be found t humble folk in whom you find the concentra essence of wisdom.' Both of these patri saw the material poverty and the spirit wealth of their people and resolved to remo the poverty and strengthen the spiritual Like Abraham Lincoln, Swami Vivekana believed that the common man must be g because God had made so many like hi To bring to the masses of India educatio food, and health became his all-absorbi passion by day and his ever-haunting dream by night. Once this huge leviathan was awakened from its slumber, no power on earth could stop India's onward march along with other progressive nations of the world.

In the course of his wide travels in India, Swami Vivekananda further discovered that it was not religion, but the falsehood, superstition, and hypocrisy generally practised in the name of religion that had caused her material decline. Loyalty to the teachings of the scriptures, prophets, and saints, on the other hand, had preserved Indian culture through centuries of foreign rule and other vicissitudes of history, whereas many powerful nations had disintegrated under similar conditions. It was neither destiny nor God's will that was responsible for India's miserable condition. God is the same to all. He does not hate one nor favour another. God's will operates through man's actions and thoughts. The righteous feel His benevolent power and the wicked term Him as inauspicious. Destiny is nothing but the unseen result of our past action which influences our present. The evil result of the past can be nullified by the good action of the present. India's misery was man-made and could be eradicated by man's effort and intelligence. He firmly believed that the dissemination of the Vedantic truths among the masses would give them muscles of iron and nerves of steel and bring out the infinite strength that lies potential in every man. Hitherto these truths were the exclusive property of saints and scholars. He wanted to broadcast them among the people at large. He saw the tragic lesson of Indian history : how high an individual could rise and how low a nation could fall. In the West an individual might not have reached the supreme height of a Buddha or a Ramakrishna, but to whatever level he attained, he carried his fellow men with him.

India's immediate task, Swami Vivekananda was convinced, was to learn from the West the secrets of science, technology, and organization, which are what have given its common man his present prosperity, power, and security. It was mainly for that purpose that he came to America in 1893 and later travelled in Europe. He seems to have been dazzled at first by the material grandeur of the West, but before long his keen mind discovered the impending crisis which would befall it through its acceptance of uninspired and selfish materialism. In stern words he asked the Christians to go back to the genuine teachings of Christ. The two great wars of our time have fully justified his forebodings. No doubt Westerners enjoyed physical happiness ; but few had inner peace. He therefore wanted the Indians to shun the naked materialism of the West and learn from it rather the secrets of producing those physical necessaries indispensable to building a stable foundation for India's national life. On this might be raised the superstructure of her cultural edifice with its dome penetrating the realm of spirit. If India neglected her spiritual values and directed her energy exclusively to political or economic purposes, Swami Vivekananda warned, she would perish. Even if she survived she would be, at best, a poor imitation of the West.

Through his speeches and writings Swami Vivekananda has given plans for India's national renascence. The masses should be given the right food and education to develop their bodies and minds. For this purpose patriotic men and women should visit the poor in their huts, open free schools for them, bring them knowledge of improved agriculture and of the arts and crafts, teach them cleanliness and sanitation, help them with medicine, tell them about the outside world, and at the same time remind them of their spiritual heritage so that they could discard the many superstitions which have encrusted Hinduism. Thus they would learn how to bring out their inner divinity through healthy bodies and alert minds. Any attempt to teach metaphysics to empty stomachs was sheer madness. How fervently he said that unselfish service to man is the real worship of God. He called the common man of India the 'Daridra-Narayana,' God in the form of the poor. Time and again he emphasized the fact that no great work is ever done through cleverness. It is honesty, integrity, and hard work that make a nation truly great. Workers for India's regeneration must renounce jealousy, selfishness, greed, and lust for power.

Incessantly the Swami wrote to his Indian followers about the regeneration of the masses. In a letter dated 1894 he said :

> 'Let each one of us pray, day and night, for the downtrodden millions in India, who are held fast by poverty, priestcraft, and tyranny — pray day and night for them... I am no metaphysician, no philosopher, nay, no saint. I am poor, I love the poor... Who feels in India for the three hundred millions of men and women sunken forever in poverty and ignorance? Where is the way out? Who feels for them? Let these people be your God — think of them, work for them, pray for them incessantly — the Lord will show you the way. Him I call a mahatma, a noble soul, whose heart bleeds for the poor. Otherwise he is a duratma, a wicked soul... So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor who, having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them.'

Swami Vivekananda saw in America, with his own eyes, what human efforts, intelligence, and earnestness could accomplish to banish poverty, superstition, squalor, disease, and other handicaps to human well-being from society. In one of his letters, dated August 20, 1893, he wrote to a devotee in India :

> 'Gird up your loins, my boys!... The hope lies in you — in the meek, the lowly, but the faithful. Feel for the miserable and look up for help — it shall come. I have travelled twelve years with this load in my heart and this idea in my head. I have gone from door to door of the so-called rich and great. With a bleeding heart I have crossed half the world to this strange land, seeking help... I may perish of cold and hunger in this land, but I bequeath to you young men this sympathy, this struggle for the poor, the ignorant, the oppressed... Go down on your faces before Him and make a great sacrifice, the sacri fice of a whole life for them, for whom H comes from time to time, whom He lo above all — the poor, the lowly, the oppres sed.'

The Swami reminded the Indians that th national ideals are renunciation and servi and if their thoughts and actions flow through these twin channels, the rest wo take care of itself. A lover of India, he sa must give up the desire for personal aggra dizement and dedicate himself to the servi of the common man. He should also ri himself of the national habit of blind imitati and dependence upon others, and above all o the national sins of jealousy and lack of dis cipline.

Swami Vivekananda was in a sense a con densed India. He regarded her as the pla ground of his childhood, the pleasure grove his youth, and the sacred Varanasi of his o age. The Motherland, which is none oth than the mother, was to him superior t heaven itself. He fervently cherished t dream of India's political freedom. Forei domination is the mother of many nation evils. The rulers exploit the material resour of the country and impose upon the peop their own culture, customs, and ways of li Slavery breeds jealousy, fear, malice, an servile dependence. Under foreign rule th development of the national culture is arrested Thus, from the cultural standpoint, the Britis period of Indian history is a sterile one. Lor Macaulay, in introducing the English langua as the medium of higher education, said th his purpose was to make educated Indian appear like Englishmen in all possible respec except colour of skin, which could not b changed. Anglicized Indians imitated the rulers in art, literature, architecture, and dres and in many other respects. They mov away from the common man and becam indifferent to his weal and woe. The Englis exploitation of the physical resources of th land was superficial, but their exploitation o the mind went deep. It will take years befor English-oriented Indians rediscover their ow cultural treasures. A top leader of the freedom movement and afterwards of free India said to me very sadly that India had very little hope as long as Westernized Indians controlled the country's education and administration.

Independence and After

After a struggle of about half a century India at last attained freedom in 1947. The political situation in the outside world was a major factor in this attainment. Freedom came to India perhaps too easily, without intense discipline and sacrifice on the part of the people. Some of the great leaders of the national struggle for the country's emancipation would perhaps be startled to see the present developments, such as the quarrel over languages and the boundaries of the states, to mention only two. There is a parallel in the French Revolution. Few people in 1789, and least of all the French revolutionaries themselves, had any idea that out of the Paris Commune's Goddess of Reason would spring the bourgeois capitalistic system and the ideals of private enterprise. The magnificent motto 'Liberty, equality, and fraternity,' which was uttered in specific denial of the European feudal view of bonded peasants as a lower type of social animal, should also have been applied, later, to the coloured people of the French colonies.

Mere political liberty, as it is generally understood today, is not the cure for all national evils. True liberty should lead to greater freedom of mind and spirit. When a country tastes real freedom its very stones vibrate with new energy, joy, and hope. Since 1947 the Government of India, and private organizations as well, have been working to raise the living standard of the common man. There is no doubt that improvements are to be seen here and there; but as far as the lot of the masses is concerned, they are not very significant. To be sure, official statistics give an optimistic picture. We are told that people are eating more food and getting better medical care. Schools and colleges are increasing in numbers. But statistics can conceal the real facts. No doubt, in cities like Delhi, Calcutta, Bombay, and Madras, one finds high buildings, fashionable houses where hospitality is lavishly shown, and modern hotels where foreign tourists and rich people eat sumptuous meals and enjoy modern comforts. But do these not stick out like sore thumbs in the midst of India's slums and poverty? Once Lenin laid down the rule that no one should have cake unless everyone had bread. Mahatma Gandhi, too, wanted to limit the maximum income of the individual until the general economic standard of the country was raised. How deeply the various plans have touched the life of the common people who form the overwhelming majority of the population is open to question. There exists in India a great disparity between the income of the few rich and that of the many poor, between the luxuries of the one and the penury of the other. The food of the common man is meagre, and the living standard extremely low. Illiteracy and sickness are widespread. Beggars roam the streets. In large cities hundreds of people are seen sleeping on the steps of big buildings and on the sidewalks. Garbage often piles up at street corners and in the poorer quarters. Slums breed disease. Many towns still have open drains. The houses of the poor and even of the middle class do not have proper ventilation and sunlight. Living quarters are overcrowded. Roads in the villages are still in a primitive condition. Students who have finished their education are often frustrated because of the lack of proper jobs. In a word, India is many years behind even the small countries of Europe regarding the bare necessaries of life. No wonder that the West speaks of India as an 'underdeveloped' country — a stigma that many educated Indians easily accept. The visible poverty and illness of the Indian masses are noticed by foreigners, who often question the practical utility of the grand philosophy and religion of India. This condition of the Indian masses has largely nullified the impression created by our scholars at foreign universities or by our politicians at international conferences or by our scientists at scientific meetings. India came twice under foreign rule because the masses, weakened by the negligence and the exploitation of the upper classes, could not offer resistance to the invaders. A chain is as strong as its weakest link.

No one will deny that India's problems — created by factors like the foreign domination of the country for about a thousand years and distortion of the religious and social systems — are deep and multifarious. Further, the abnormal political condition of the world slows down constructive national work. But all the progressive countries, great and small, have had to face similar problems. If right plans are made, and the leaders entrusted with their execution prove their absolute honesty, people will cheerfully do their share. Did not hundreds of thousands of men and women enthusiastically follow Mahatma Gandhi's leadership? The caste system and religion, which preserved Hindu Society and built up Indian culture, are often pointed out as obstacles in the path of India's progress. To be sure, both need correction. This, however, will not come through criticism and abuse but through right education. Let people be given the opportunity to study India's spiritual culture as embodied in the *Upaniṣads*, the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, the *Rāmāyaṇa* and the *Mahābhārata*, side by side with science, philosophy, and the social and economic systems of the West, and they will easily give up what is incompatible with the advancement of the country in the modern world.

In the concluding verse of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* Sri Krishna speaks of the cooperation between the military and the spiritual power as the way to India's 'fortune, victory, prosperity, and right conduct.' In the first verse of the fourth chapter He refers to the decline of yoga or spiritual culture. Commenting on this, Śankarāchārya says that the military power derives its strength from the storehouse of spirituality. The righteousness of society is preserved when the military and the spiritual powers nourish each other. Today in 'secular' India this cooperation is lacking, which fact is responsible for much of her confusion. Let the spiritual culture of India be taught at every level of education. Thus, the workers for India's uplift will feel genuine pride in her mission and will have a song to sing. Moreover, some sort of compulsory military training for youth will infuse their actions, thoughts, and words with discipline and orderliness. These two measures will go a great way toward solving India's multifarious problems.

Indians Abroad

For the past fifteen years, thousands of Indians, both men and women, have been going every year to Europe and America. Among them one finds business men, tourists, government officials, research scholars, social workers, distinguished men on the cultural exchange programmes, and a large number of students. Business men generally want to further their own business interests. Tourists enjoy the fun. Members of the diplomatic service are intelligent and conscientious and generally perform their duties faithfully. But too often they lack the patriotic zeal and the revolutionary fervour shown by the fighters for freedom during the struggle for independence — both of which virtues we need in an even greater degree during the present time of our national reconstruction. They are also not generally conversant with the spiritual and cultural heritage of India, by means of which they could impress thoughtful people in the West. Scholars coming to America on the programme of cultural exchange make whirlwind tours of the country in two or three months and visit a few universities and cultural organizations. How a real cultural exchange can take place through such short visits passes one's understanding. Most of the research students work in laboratories for only a year or so and they often feel frustrated when they return to India in the absence of highly developed research facilities such as are available in America and England. Furthermore, a student does not develop a real capacity for research through such a brief stay. Many students seek higher degrees from foreign universities to get better jobs after their return, and then feel disappointed because India's standard of salary is low. Some refuse to go back, and marry and settle down abroad to enjoy a comfortable life. Among those who go back to India, some return lured by higher salaries in the West. Many students carry on research work in America which has very little bearing on India's vital problems.

Now, no one will deny the value of visits of qualified students and scholars to the West, either for gaining further knowledge or for the dissemination of Indian culture. But the vital problem in India today is that of the masses —their hunger, ignorance, and ill-health. In any national programme this fact should receive prior consideration. The selection of students for studying abroad must be carefully made. No one should be encouraged to come to the West just for the sake of a degree, be it an M.A. or a Ph.D., which can easily be obtained in India. Modern Russia is not being built up by the Russian students who have studied abroad. Only mature students who have already done work in India and who are thoroughly acquainted with India's social, political, and economic condition should enjoy this privilege. Every student, before he leaves the country, should be told what special subjects he should study and what kind of work he should do after his return. If the students go abroad with some knowledge of Indian culture, they will obtain respect from their fellow workers and friends. It is sad to see how much of money and energy is being wasted today by thousands of students who come to foreign countries just for a degree or to carry on research for a short period. With a part of that money India could equip her colleges with scientific and medical instruments, and invite foreign professors, if necessary, to teach there. Foreign travel must be drastically curtailed. Only those who are engaged in the most vital problems of the country which need outside help and experience should be allowed to travel. Let all, in whatever field their duties be, high or low, dedicate themselves to the welfare of the country, forgoing personal power or profit, and in a short time the country will make phenomenal progress. We may learn many things from the outside world to regenerate India but our real inspiration must come from our own traditions and state of affairs. The saviour of a country in its critical hour has always sprung from its own soil.

India possesses intelligence and material resources to build up her national life. She does not have to go to the outside world with a begging bowl for grants and loans. Foreign help has behind it political and military considerations and is given in self-interest. If they are not fulfilled the donor shows resentment. The receiver also cultivates the habit of helpless dependence. It is often noticed that in those countries which receive foreign help abundantly, a considerable part of which is given for military purposes, the rich become richer and the poor poorer. If Indians utilize all their resources, physical and mental, work hard and unselfishly, India will not need much foreign help. If any outside help, technical or otherwise, is absolutely necessary, it will be given with joy. If Indians are strong, united, and ready to shed their last drop of blood for the country, they will not have to fear foreign penetration or open invasion. It is the poverty of the masses, frustration of educated youths, and corruption in high places that invite dictatorship and communism.

The Common Man in Russia

I have just returned* from a visit to Russia, Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, and am writing this article at Triberg, a tiny town nestled in the Black Forest in Germany. The contrast between the material condition of the common man in India, and in Europe and Russia, fills an Indian's heart with shame and sadness. I was much impressed with what I saw during my short visit to Russia, which has been making a great experiment since 1917 to raise the condition of the masses, who for centuries suffered from the exploitation of priests and a powerful nobility. Before giving my impressions I will briefly describe the country and the people.

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* July 1962.

Russia today is nearly three times as large as the United States of America, forty times as large as France, and ninety times as large as Great Britain. No other country knows such vast spaces. The distance by rail between Leningrad on the Baltic and Vladivostok on the Pacific is 5,793 miles. Russia contains deserts as hot as the world's warmest places and cold forests where in winter the thermometer registers as low as 90 or even 100 degrees below zero Fahrenheit. From the moon, Russia perhaps resembles a layer cake, with arctic icing at the top, green strips at the centre, and a hard-burned desert crust below. A major part of Russia is monotonously flat. The Úrals are the only mountains in the heart of the country, and they are little more than large hills, whose rounded tops are hardly noticed by travellers on the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Of the nine rivers in the world that are more than 2,800 miles long, Russia has four. It was along the rivers that Russia grew. It is said that no people can sleep longer than the Russians and no people can work — or fight harder than the Russians. The early history of Russia can be scantily reconstructed from old Byzantine records, occasional Persian and Arabic sources, and the doubtful chronicle of Nestor, a learned monk of Kiev, who lived about 1100 A.D. Russia's political history began to develop from the middle of the ninth century, when the Scandinavian Rurik entered Russia and founded a dynasty. During the early feudal period in Europe and again after the fall of Constantinople (1453), European culture flourished in Russia. Cities like Kiev and Novogorod had palaces and cathedrals of great beauty and craftsmanship. Russian cultural achievements have been preserved in the great museums of the country. Peter the Great (1682-1725), who brought science and technology from Europe, was the builder of modern Russia. From the time of Catherine II (1762-1796) the cultural life of the country was powerfully influenced by Europe. Under Vladimir the Saint (978-1015), Russia accepted Christianity from the Greek Orthodox Church. In the nineteenth century great literary men flourished and art and music found patrons in the Russian court.

Prior to the revolution of 1917, the common man lived in squalor, poverty, and ignorance. From very early times the country was invaded by the Tartars, the Huns, the Teutonic Knights, the Poles, and the Swedes. Big cities were destroyed and quickly rebuilt. In recent years the two great world wars worked havoc. Ancient cities like Kiev and Minsk, once prosperous and beautiful, were reduced to rubble. The Nazi army marched to the outskirts of Leningrad and encamped there for nine hundred days, destroying everything in its wake. There is hardly a family in Russia which has not lost a male member in the war. Yet now there is no trace of this destruction. Apartment houses with modern facilities are being built. There are beautiful parks, recreation places for the young and the old, gymnasiums, and theatres dedicated to the welfare of the people. No bill-boards or other advertisements spoil the beauty of the cities or the countryside. As everything is controlled by the State there is no room for individual competition. The Hermitage, the great museum in Leningrad, and the Kremlin in Moscow, containing priceless art treasures, are daily visited by thousands of people. Even in distant Siberia new cities are being built with modern comforts. There is in Moscow an exhibition ground which contains individual buildings representing Russia's fifteen republics, in which thousands of visitors see the sputniks, rockets, and other products of science and technology. Naturally they feel happy and proud about the U.S.S.R.'s great achievements. The city streets are absolutely clean. In the morning one sees elderly women sweeping them with big brooms. The subways in Moscow and Leningrad are very beautiful. One does not see the like of them anywhere in Europe or America. The floors walls, pillars, and ceilings of the stations are made of marble and other stones of various colours, dug from Russian quarries. They are adorned with statues and bas-reliefs of national heroes, wars, workshops, and other subjects which stimulate people's patriotic fervour. On the roads one sees many more trucks than automobiles, which presumably are considered items of luxury. This shows the quick pace of industrialization of the country. At the same time, there are no strikes or unemployment.

Education and medical care are free for all and from these the poorer people obtain the maximum benefit. The Moscow University has thirty thousand students. In addition to receiving free education, post-graduate students obtain stipends for the support of their families. I have been told that after discharge from the hospital, a patient, if necessary, is sent to a convalescent home at the expense of the State. At Minsk I fell ill and went to a hospital, where I received free treatment. For three days doctors visited me in my hotel morning and evening. On the day of my departure the doctor examined me at six o'clock in the morning. I did not succeed in persuading the physicians to take a fee, as all are paid by the State.

Attached to the factories there are cultural centres where workers enjoy music, dancing, swimming, moving pictures, and other forms of recreation. They are given free vacations in healthful places. Theatres and opera houses, which fifty years ago were visited only by aristocrats and military officers, are now frequented by the common man. No bargaining is allowed in the stores or shops, as the prices are fixed by the Government. True, the department stores contain very few luxury articles compared to the American standard but people do not appear to complain. It should be remembered that before 1917 Russia was far behind America and Western Europe in science and technology. She is now in the process of catching up. Tipping is not allowed. I could not persuade my two polite and intelligent guides in Moscow and Leningrad to take a little gift from me. Finally they agreed to accept some of my books on Hinduism.

All these achievements since 1917 are the result of careful planning. While subways, sputniks, rockets, and nuclear weapons were built at terrific expense, the basic needs of the common man were not overlooked. Business and industry are controlled by the State. Therefore, there is no scope for undue profit taking. This may explain how the Government can divert a huge fund to improve the condition of the people. Behind the Soviet success lies ungrudging sacrifice, hard work, and iron discipline on the part of men and women. The energy of two hundred and twenty millions of people has been harnessed for the welfare of the common man. They all look healthy and happy because they have a song to sing while they work. They are determined to make Russia a model progressive country.

There are in Russia two million of official Communists whose thinking is controlled by the philosophy of Marx and Lenin. Education is guided by the same policy, the goal being to create a classless society with healthy bodies and sound minds. People are taught to obey rather than to think. Though the State is neutral about religion, Communists are all materialists. But the people can attend church services without any let or hindrance. I attended some of the services in Moscow. The church was full. The worship consists mostly of congregational singing. *The New York Times* of September 14, 1962, published a report of the religious life in Russia by a group of American ministers. They were impressed by the 'vitality of the church' under a government whose purpose is to eliminate the church. They were 'surprised to find groups of young children, young men and women and men of all ages' among church-goers in twelve Soviet cities visited. There is a beautiful mosque in Moscow built by Moslems for the purpose of worship. Scientists and intellectuals deny any supernatural power controlling the universe. I suppose the case is the same with those classes of people everywhere in the world.

Foreign tourists in Russia are treated with politeness, courtesy, and kindness. Many Russians I saw in the hotels are far from being inquisitive and curious about foreigners. I talked freely with our guides, one of whom was a school teacher and the other a research scholar in chemistry. They seemed to be well-informed about what was going on in the outside world. We frankly discussed religion, philosophy, and Russian life in general.

After my return I was asked if I had seen only those places which the Russian Government wants tourists to see, and if there are no slums or poor people in the countryside. I am sure there is poverty in Russia, as everywhere in the world, though I did not see any beggars, real or disguised, in Moscow, Leningrad, or Minsk. I was told that I could go anywhere and see any place barring military installations. One needs special permits to see certain factories. Foreigners are not permitted to photograph bridges. Intourist, the only Russian travel agency, recommends to the foreign tourists certain cities where comfortable hotels and English-speaking guides are available. I believe human nature is practically the same all over the world regarding certain basic feelings and emotions, such as love, hate, and indifference. People's thoughts and actions vary according to such factors as geography, nature, and tradition.

Russia is certainly different from the West and therefore somewhat inscrutable to Westerners. There is a very important reason why Russia is different from France, England, Germany, and the other Western countries. Europe was at one time dominated by Rome and came under Roman social and legal influence. Russia was never a Roman province, and that accounts for much. A Russian perhaps does not respect the letter of the law in the same way as a European or an American does. He feels that as laws are made by men, so also they can be broken by men. But he is very loyal to his traditions. Russia has grown up separately on the edge of and within the vast continent of Asia. Often characters in Russian novels behave with wilful inconsistency and a most un-Roman logic. Russian art appears to foreigners involved, and Russian national ideals, as reflected in the national policies, too often distant. In two thousand years of Russian history there runs a mystic awareness of man's for ever lonely soul and of his helplessness in the face of the unknowable. In a land of stern natural forces and cruel winds and frosts, people's minds are more sombre and less playful than the minds of those in sunnier and softer climates. Russians are seldom superficial. Even their love songs contain melancholy harmonies. Russia's problems have not been trivial. Time and again Russia was invaded from the West. Kiev, the capital of Russia, fell under the Tartars at the battle of Kalka in 1223. Central Russia was under the control of the Golden Horde for over three hundred years.

Though the Russian people have for ever been struggling against the forces of frost and storm and the unknown and unpredictable menaces that lurk beyond their limitless horizons, they are irresistible in the mass; but individually they are doomed to helplessness and unceasing labour.

The clue to the Russian character can be found in the myths associated with creation, the earth, and the Russian man.*

Sviatagor, the Creator, is whimsical. A huge creature, in the beginning he was fast asleep. One sees a lack of plan in what he does and from his actions learns the uselessness of haste. He wakes up and stretches his body lazily. Wherever his limbs rest a valley is created. He summons his tall horse, leaps into the saddle, and begins to ride. Once he is awake, not unlike the Russians themselves, he moves and his progress is wild and irresistible. Mountains are formed by the earth torn up by his horse's hooves; and where his horse stops, there appears a lake. After covering a great distance, he stops and decides that, after all, it is too early for him to be up and about. Being in no hurry, he lies down and goes to sleep again. In this story one can see the man of the long Russian winter, wondering impatiently when spring will come and the land be firm enough for ploughing, even though he knows that impatience is futile. One can see in it, too, the longing of the Russian people for unity, success, and freedom. According to the legend, Sviatagor is still sleeping. But it is said that if ever Russia, the land of 'down yonder into the far away,' is in danger, he will awake and ride again.

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* The materials for these stories have been gathered from *Russia Then and Always* by Nina Verhoff-koy Hyde and Fillmore Hyde, published by Coward-McCann, Inc., New York.

The second of the three great forces is Mikula Selianinovich. Mikula is the earth, and it is Mikula who makes the land ready so that man may inhabit it and carry on the struggle for life and sustenance. Before Sviatagor went to sleep he gave a loud cry, which was heard all over the creation. Mikula heard this cry and rose out of the soil, with a huge plough in his arms. He moved on deliberately, for though creation may be speedy, the growing of seeds, the currents of the great slow rivers of Russia, and the changing of the seasons cannot be hurried. These things are in the province of Mikula. Methodically and patiently he travelled over the land, throwing grain on either side with a vast, broad sweep of his tremendous arm, and pushing his plough in front of him. At length, having covered a vast distance, he decided that he had done enough and that it was for man to carry on the work. So, like Sviatagor, Mikula, who is also Russian, went back to sleep. But he promised that he would wake up if anyone attempted to destroy his work. And if he was not strong enough to punish the intruder, he would waken Sviatagor, who is irresistible.

Next appears the Russian common man himself, Ilya Murometz, doomed to suffer the ills of life and carry on the work. Ilya's mother was active every minute around the house without any help from him, though he was healthy and strong and capable of great achievements. He was not lazy or indifferent, but like traditional Russians he just sits. In spite of his mother's pleadings to rouse him, he just sat *seven times seven times seven years*. At the end of this period his mother asked him the reason for his inactivity. He replied that he had decided that he had to think, and that the thinking would require another period of seven times seven times seven years. So his mother waited. When the second period was over, she asked him what he was thinking about. He was thinking, he said, about what he ought to think about. So a third period passed.... His mother asked him what he had thought to think about. He said that his thinking was over. He now knew that he had some action to perform; what action he did not know, and to find that out would again require seven times seven times seven years. Thus the incredible Russian myth goes on. Time is nothing. Work and patience are everything. So Ilya's mother kept quiet, knowing by now that Ilya's character was not to be changed. Finally Ilya stood up and said goodbye to his mother. With a vigour and energy as great as his apparent slothfulness had been before, he ranged through all the land of down yonder into the far away, ploughing fields, felling forests, repelling invading hordes, defending the weak, and wreaking vengeance on criminals and bandits — in a word, doing what a man should do. But with all this, Ilya, the Russian man, prefers a simple village feast and good companions, a day of idleness, to work. But if work be necessary, then let it be work indeed, cataclysmic and thoroughgoing. That is his philosophy.

Here is one more story from Russian mythology for a clue to another side of the Russian character. It is about Alyosha Popovitch of the Golden Hair. Handsome and ingratiating, he loves the ladies, with whom his success is enormous. He has a swaggering nature and his devil-may-care life is one of wilful disregard of man-made laws and rules, which he feels free to break. By sly and frankly underhand means he gets his way and gains his ends, which, of course, are good for Russia. Alyosha is of prime importance because throughout all Russian history the maddening and yet appealing qualities of this lawless hero are for ever cropping up in the Russian people, stubbornly thwarting all efforts toward reform and regulation. While other heroes represent the Russian's love for and willingness to die for the land of Sviatagor, the traits of Alyosha Popovitch symbolize the everlasting unruliness of spirit, the lust for wandering, and the vague, undirected rebellion that was the despair of those who fought to make of Russia an orderly and effective State.

Throughout her long history Russia has always felt conscious of the extreme remoteness of her land. She has seen the outside world most often in the unpleasing role of forces bent on conquest or destruction, and her views have not been coloured sweetly. The defense of the Russian land has been the theme on which her best-loved songs have been composed. To the Russian, knowing himself and his land, there seems nothing strange in the long sleeps of Mikula or Sviatagor or the endless dreaming of Ilya Murometz. There is no hurry in nature or in the Russian soil. Even Russian wars, — fought with the alien peoples of Asia and the envious and overcrowded people of Europe — have borne an aspect of inevitability and timelessness. In his folk tales the Russian reveals himself as a man who will sleep much and drink much vodka, sing and quarrel. But if the Russian must, he will fight, and fight with fearful fury, looking on his enemies as men of great efficiency, yet withal fools to dream of such a conquering as would make a slave of Ilya Murometz. Over and over again in her wars Russia has shown that by retreat she can survive and in time return and win. And also in his folk tales the Russian indicates his knowledge that it is not parades and speeches that build empires, but land and men, work and patience.

Perhaps I have given a one-sided picture of Russia after such a short visit. The purpose of this article is not to pass judgment on the Russian political or economic system, nor on the methods by which they operate. I differ with them in many respects. I do not regard as completely evil what is happening in Russia, nor do I accept the view held by many Russians that the West is wholly evil. Conditioned by Hindu religion and philosophy, I refuse to see a fundamental distinction between good and evil, as between black and white. There are many other shades in between them. I also do not believe in the absolute monopoly of truth by any single nation or culture, nor in the slogan "either — or". My purpose in this section of my article is to give Indians an example of the dedication of a people for the improvement of the common man under very trying circumstances.

Often in Russia I thought of the future of Communism. It is a growing process and bound to change with the progress of time. If it remains a fixed dogma it will perish. Already, however, the policies of Marx and Lenin have been modified to suit changing conditions. Stalin has been discredited and his body removed from the mausoleum in Moscow's Red Square. One does not see his statue or picture anywhere. One happy thing to notice is that Russia is increasing her contacts with the outside world. English is being studied more and more in the universities. Tourists are visiting Russia in increasing numbers. Arrangements have been made for an exchange between Russia and America of experts in science, agriculture, technology, art, music, and literature. All this is bound to alter the views of the Russians and Americans regarding one another.

A second thought that often came to my mind in Russia is whether, in spite of its many tangible achievements, a purely materialistic system like Communism can endure long. Does it not contain within it the seed of its own destruction? History shows, as with ancient Egypt and Babylonia, that a purely materialistic culture ultimately disintegrates. Ancient Greece, too, cherished the ideal of a sound mind in a sound body, *mens sana in corpore sano*, but could not maintain her greatness for more than a century, despite the fact that she produced outstanding leaders in the fields of art, philosophy, politics, and literature.

Thirdly, I thought, history shows that any nation which accumulates power tends to expand. It follows the policy of conquering other countries by force, infiltration, or subversion, and thus becomes a world menace. Finally it invites its own downfall. There are the examples of Germany under Hitler and of Italy under Mussolini. If Communism can control the temptation and urge to expansion and change its philosophy of materialism, it can very well play an important part in bringing about the welfare of the common man everywhere.

In the world's history the lot of the common man has heretofore been neglected. The brahmins attained their special status in Hindu society through religious disciplines and scriptural knowledge, and the barons and the feudal chiefs in European society, during the Middle Ages down to the French Revolution, through military power and heroism on the battlefield. In contemporary America, the leaders of society rose to their privileged position through the accumulation of wealth. But now the common man is becoming increasingly conscious of his inherent power. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were periods of imperial expansion, when the common man suffered most from foreign exploitation. The twentieth century is an era of liberation, in which the common man is playing a vital part. The modern national leaders — whether in India, China, Russia, or Africa — have had to lean on the support of the common man. With him lies the wave of the future.

The common man in the West

Though I experienced much kindness in Russia, I felt relaxed when I returned from Moscow to the European environment of Scandinavia and happy when I finally arrived in America, where I have been a resident since 1931. I breathed free air again. This shows, as every tourist knows, how much a person is conditioned by the surroundings and way of life to which he is accustomed. I may mention here that during my thirty-one years' stay in America I never felt that I was a foreigner. I have received unfailing courtesy and affection from all classes of people.

The Scandinavian countries, which I had visited before, have provided health, vitality, and physical well-being for the masses, though they did not pass through the violent upheaval of contemporary Russia. Unemployment, strikes, starvation, and lack of proper housing are rare. Everybody, from childhood to old age, seems to be well taken care of as far as basic needs are concerned. Medical care and education are accessible to all. One sees in the Danish villages, as in India, the huts of peasants thatched with straw; but with proper windows and flowers they look beautiful. In all these countries the streets are clean and people bear themselves with dignity.

The village of Triberg, in the Black Forest, impressed me very much. This part of Germany was occupied by the Romans about a hundred years after Christ. They built superb roads, some of which are still being used. The Black Forest is noted for its healthful climate. One sees everywhere cleanliness and general prosperity. Triberg contains all the modern amenities. A waterfall, the highest in Germany, descends in cascades and is an attraction for sightseers. There are fine walks in the pine covered hills commanding beautiful natural scenery. The people are courteous. Triberg is well known for the manufacture of cuckoo clocks and various musical instruments. It has a fine museum, a theatre, a gymnasium, and also schools and hospitals. How often I have thought that equally attractive villages could be built in many parts of the Himalayas and other healthy and scenic places of India, where people could enjoy their vacations and get fresh energy and strength.

The different countries of Europe have developed their national life in different ways. Everywhere there is a loyalty to the past, from which they draw their inspiration. In England, which still contains elements of the class system, individual freedom is never surrendered.

England started the parliamentary system of Government. Issues are decided not by bullets but by ballots. America has especially developed the concept of equality of men and social justice for all. Everyone is entitled to enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. One American can very well say to another : 'You are no better than me ; why should I cower before you ? I am no better than you ; why should you humble yourself before me ?' This is the essence of democracy : a recognition of a man's inherent dignity — unaffected by his scholarship, wealth, or social position. In the West, views of opponents are respected. Voltaire once said to an opponent of his : 'I disagree completely with everything you have said, but I will lay down my life to defend your right to say it.' Dogmatism is not accepted in learned circles. Cromwell is reported to have said to a dogmatist : 'By the bowels of Christ, I beseech you to admit that you may be wrong at least once in your life.' Consciousness of duty binds Western society together. Many people know the famous order issued by Nelson on the eve of the battle of Trafalgar : 'England expects every man to do his duty.' Next morning was seen written on the boiler a sentence in bold letters : 'How does the son of a bitch know that we shan't ?' This pungent statement was made by an ordinary marine. A true gentleman in the modern West combines the self-control and courtesy of the monk with the determination of the Medieval knight to avenge injustice anywhere. America cherishes the ideal of espousing the cause of the underdog. Speaking broadly, Europe has developed a refinement of intellect, taste, and human relationships of which it can be justly proud. 'The other man first' — seems to be the motto of the refined Westerner. Indians visiting Europe and America should observe these and other good traits of Westerners in order to avoid the influence of their bad traits. Once Swami Vivekananda remarked that he wanted to create in India a European society with Hindu religion. While not losing sight of our spiritual ideal, we must 'develop our industries and commerce, our wealth and materials, and strength and effectiveness.'

Swami Vivekananda, as I have said, wanted Indians to learn science and technology from the West to improve their material conditions. His dream, which at the time could not be fulfilled on account of India's peculiar political situation, is being realized since the attainment of India's freedom. The Government is giving every encouragement to the development of science, technology, and industry. But there is a real danger. Science and technology uninspired by belief in a higher reality and a spiritual concept of man and the universe are not a panacea for all human ills. It is they that are mainly responsible, on account of certain types of mind working behind them, for today's world crisis. In the present state of human thinking any major discovery of science can very well give power to the strong to exploit the weak. Knowledge of science must be guided by higher wisdom, compassion, and human sympathy. Everyone should have access to knowledge, but he should also be taught how to make right use of that knowledge. A Hindu proverb says that to feed a cobra with milk without extracting its poison fangs is only to increase its venom. If India goes mad after naked material enjoyments which shatter both the mind and the soul, she will not again produce a Buddha or a Ramakrishna. She will disappoint those earnest Westerners who still expect 'light from the East'. What India needs now is careful planning of her national life, with dedicated leaders to execute it — a plan which will provide education, food, and health to the common man, satisfy his other basic needs, give him security throughout life, and afford leisure and opportunities to all to develop their spiritual potential. Such a plan need not exclude genuine research in the cultural areas of art, literature, philosophy, and the physical sciences. No other religion or philosophy is as intellectual as Hinduism, and at no other period of Indian history were the intellectuals more ignorant of or indifferent to their spiritual culture than in modern times. For the fruition of the plan what both the leaders and the workers need is feeling. Swami Vivekananda emphasized this feeling for the common man. Knowledge, perhaps, we have enough of; it does not initiate action. Feeling does. Let us not exhaust ourselves in loud talk, otherwise the national life will be paralysed. The engine, the whistle, and other parts of a steamship operate through steam. If all the steam is spent by the whistle, the ship does not move.

India's mission

From the very remote past India has developed a culture which has reconciled worldly prosperity with the Highest Good — abhyudaya with nihsreyasa. When India was spiritually great she was also materially prosperous. Throughout her history she has stressed charity, non-violence, self-control, and other spiritual virtues. She has often sacrificed material power in pursuit of higher ideals. She has valued inner wisdom and peace more than the knowledge and excitement of the outer world. Her saints and philosophers have shown how to sublimate material enjoyment (bhoga) into communion with the infinite (yoga). Wealth (artha) and sense-pleasure (kama), if based upon dharma (righteousness), ultimately confer on the spirit liberation from bondage to matter (moksha). Material enjoyment based on sheer competition ultimately brings boredom and has no spiritual value.

Today many people in Europe and America ask whether, with the growth of science and technology, resulting in increased physical comfort, India will not so much stress renunciation, Nirvana, and the futility of rebirth. But a Buddha or a Swami Vivekananda did not renounce the world and set forth in quest of the Eternal because he was poor or frustrated in life. At a certain stage of evolution every soul revolts against the finite view of life and seeks communion with the Infinite. 'That which is infinite is alone happiness.' The West, saturated with material enjoyment, will one day seek spiritual light, and may very well seek Indian wisdom for guidance. May India not fail it.

India's future mission was anticipated by Swami Vivekananda. He envisaged the greatness of the India to come as surpassing the glories of her past. The country that has produced, in an uninterrupted line, illumined souls from the Vedic seers to Ramakrishna cannot remain stagnant, far less disintegrate. However much we may learn from the outside world, the broad paths of our national progress have been chalked out by our saints and seers.

In this centenary year of Swami Vivekananda's birth, many institutions will be dedicated to perpetuating his memory. But their purpose will be fulfilled if Indians, both men and women, dedicate themselves to the all-round welfare of India's common man, the most pressing need of our time, and for its realization pledge their life, liberty, and sacred honour.

We must see how the engine of society works in other countries, and keep free and open communication with what is going on in the minds of other nations, if we really want to be a nation again. And over and above all, we must cease to tyrannize.

* * *

The Hindu must not give up his religion, but must keep religion within its proper limits and give freedom to society to grow. . . . Now, freedom is the only condition of growth; take that off, the result is degeneration. . . . Be pure and holy, and love for love's sake. Love the poor, the miserable, the downtrodden, and the Lord will bless you.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

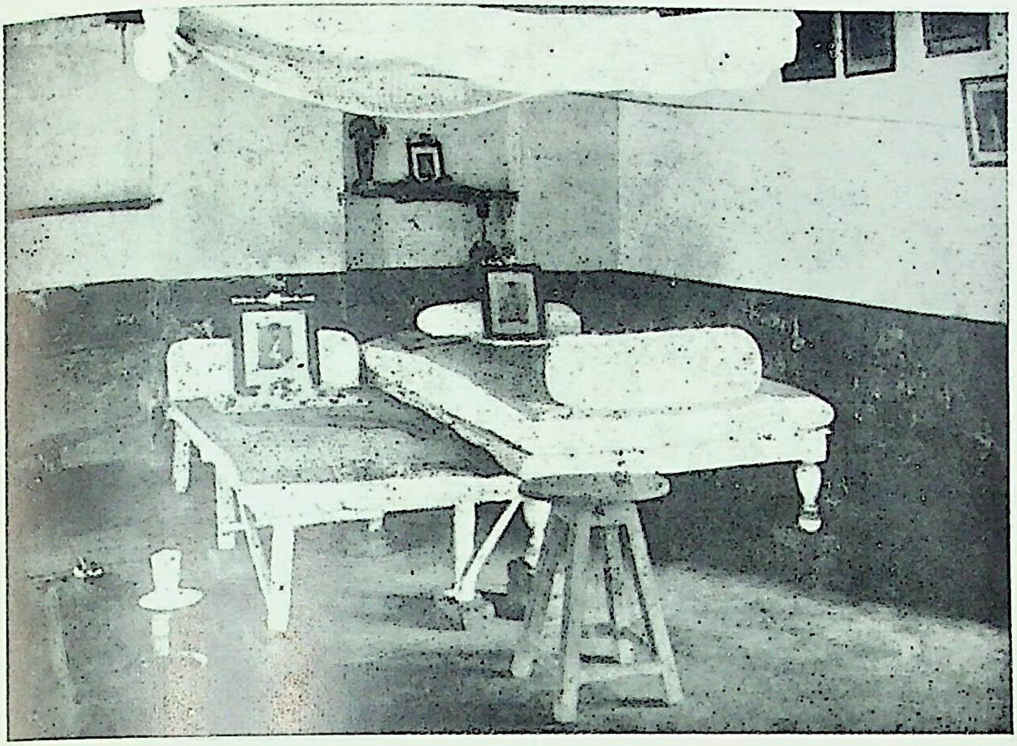
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA—A SPOKESMAN OF THE DIVINE LOGOS

SARVEPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN

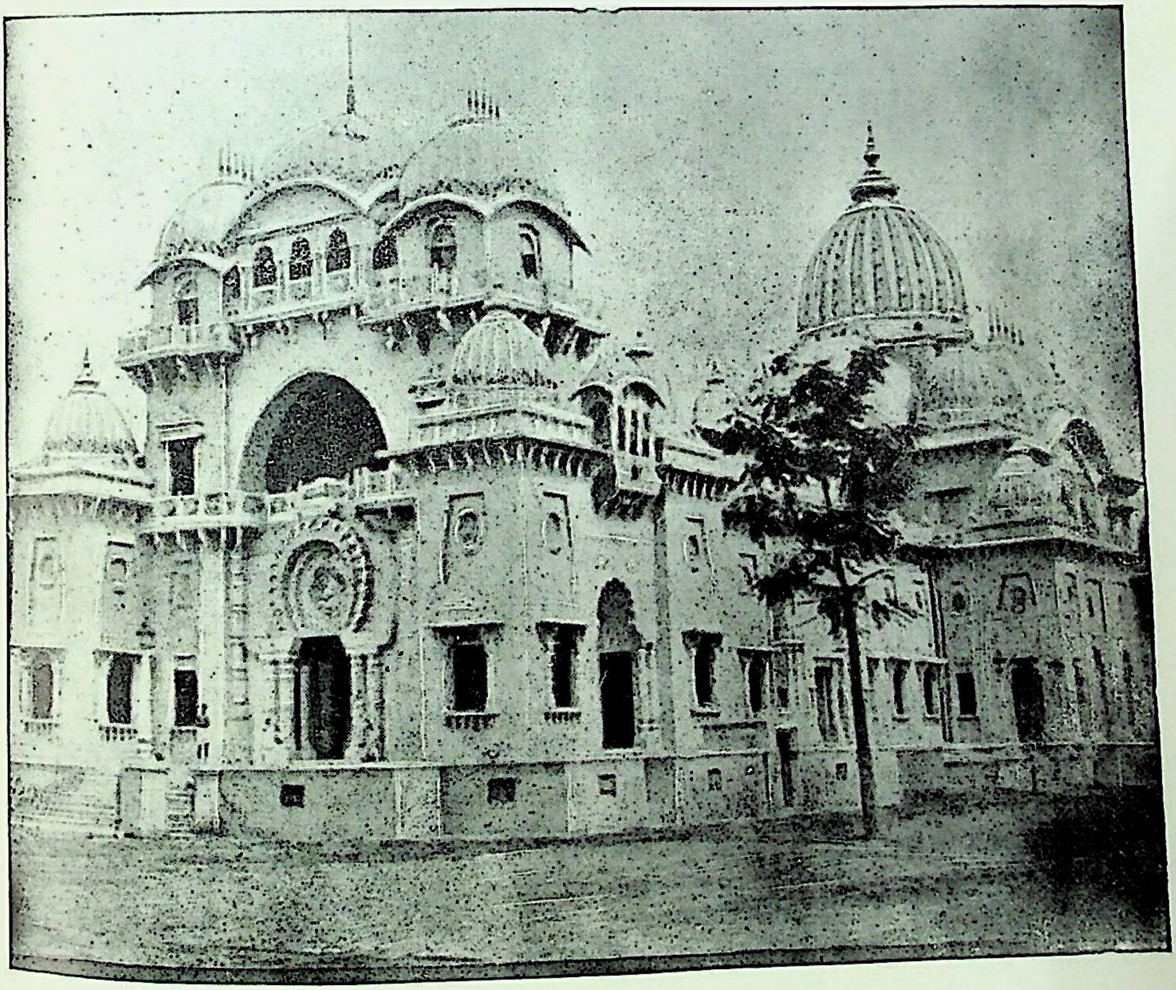
[This article forms in effect, the text of an address given by Dr Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, President of India, on March 31, 1963, on the occasion of Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary at Sri Avinashilingam Home Science College, Coimbatore. — *Ed.*]

In any living culture, you will always find a perpetual process of renewal. What happens to be heresy today becomes heritage tomorrow. What is adventure for us today, becomes legacy tomorrow. In other words, if a culture is to perpetuate itself, it is reaffirming its fundamentals and trying to readjust them to the requirements of each generation. If we lose this quality of self-renewal, the culture itself becomes decadent. It has been our good fortune that so far as the Indian culture is concerned, it has had this living vitality, this capacity to renew itself, to shed away the old and reincarnate itself in the new. In chapter 4 of the Bhagavad Gītā, the Teacher says: 'I taught this yoga to Vivaswān, Vivaswān taught it to Manu. Manu taught it to Ikṣvāku. Today I am teaching it to you, Arjuna.' In other words it is the same old Purātana Dharma also called Sanātana Dharma, the ancient doctrine. It is the eternal doctrine, that is being expressed in different ages by different individuals. The Buddha when he came said, 'I am the restorer of the ancient path. I am not giving you anything new'. Jesus proclaimed that he came to fulfil, not to destroy. In other words, all the great teachers of the world take up the fundamental truth, discard the excrescences, the accretions which had crept into them and recapture the original purity, and present it to their generation. The great teachers are the vehicles of the living Word. They are the voice of the inspired Logos. They are the people who give utterance to the Eternal, dwelling in each individual. They have the capacity to give articulate expression to them. Swami Vivekananda was a spokesman of this divine Logos and he took hold of the requirements of this age in which he was born and presented it so as to make a fervent appeal to the hungry heart and the searching mind of his generation.

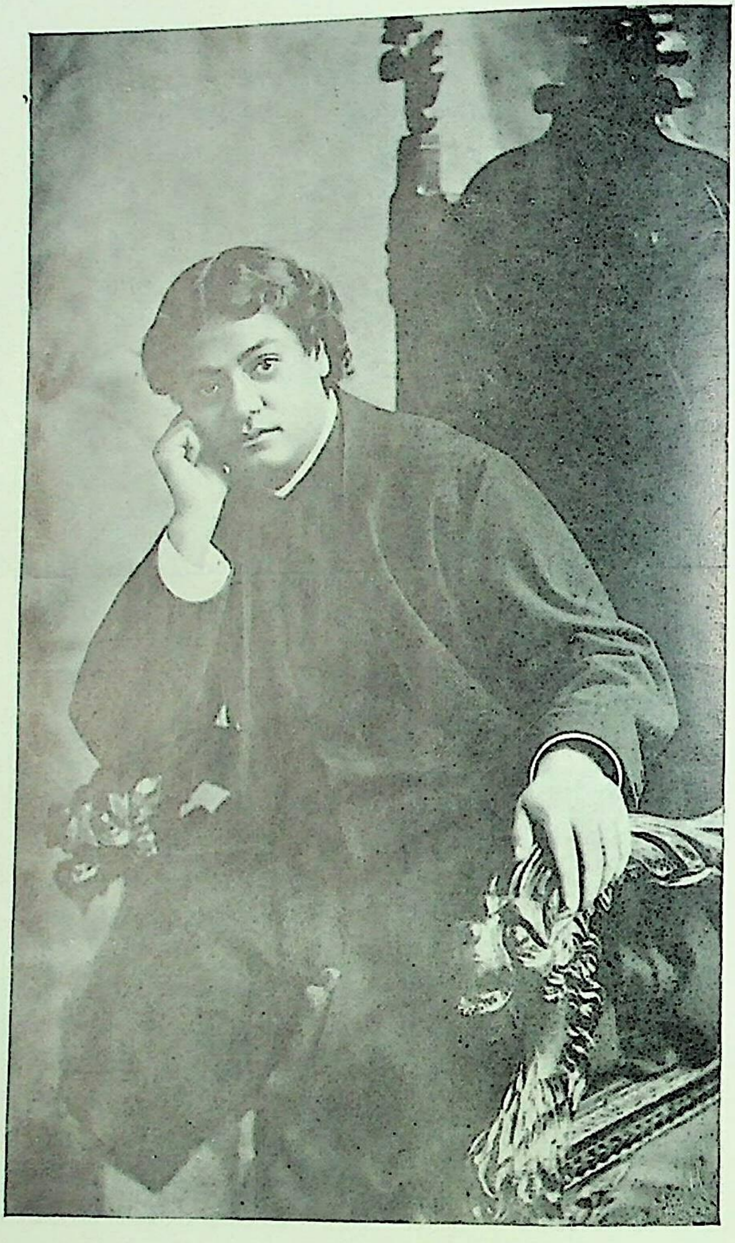
He was born in an age when science was predominant. He was a student in a Calcutta college where he read the great works of Herbert Spencer, John Stuart Mill, Bentham, Thomas Henry Huxley etc. He was steeped in the spirit of science. He was restless in spirit. His mind tossed about hither and thither. He did not know what to do, became an agnostic, joined the Brahmo Samaj, gave it up and was in a pathetic condition of mind. He needed something to live by and he was not able to get that thing. He wanted to know whether there was anyone in this world who could catch the spirit, who could convince him that he saw God, even as we see the walls before us or the audience here. He wanted someone who cared for facts. Science is a study of facts. It is a study of actual experience and if one is to be satisfied by the spirit of science, he must feel that there is a Divine Reality which is a fact which has been sensed, tested and experienced by people. Chance as some people would call it, providence as others would say, led him to the door of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. He went to him in dire distress and asked him, 'Have you seen God? Can you prove God to me?' The answer came: "Yes. I have seen God. I have seen Him much more intensely than I see you here.' That was the man who was able to transmit to him, to communicate to him and to tell him, that he saw the Divine Reality



Sri Ramakrishna's Room at Dakshineswar.



Sri Ramakrishna's Temple at Belur Math.



(CALIFORNIA 1900)

'After all, Joe, I am only the boy who used to listen with rapt wonderment to the wonderful words of Ramakrishna under the Banyan at Dakshineswar. That is my true nature; works and activities, doing good and so forth are all superimpositions.'

even as we see tables and chairs. Then the conversion happened. It was a moment of his rebirth, so to say. He became convinced of the reality of God. He said religion is not a matter of doctrinal conformity or ritualistic piety. They may be essential for people to reach a particular goal, but its fundamental reality is the sight of God. Faith must be replaced by sight. Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God. It is that seeing of God that makes a man truly religious. An authentically religious man is one who does not report from hearsay, who does not quote scriptures or authorities but says, 'I have felt in the pulse of my being the reality of the divine. If there is one fact in this world, it is the supreme fact of God. As you have seen other facts I have noted this particular fact. This is something which is vital to me, in which I live.'

Here it was that Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa were echoing the great tradition of this country, the country which laid stress on the sight of God. सदा पश्यन्ति सूरयः। The sages see constantly. ब्रह्मसंस्पर्श as the Gita puts it : वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तं 'I know this eminent Puruṣa', as the Upanishads say it. It is not a question of talking about God, acquiring a doctrine about God or accepting dogmas about God. It is a question of seeing God face to face, as other individuals see other sights. That is what distinguishes the authentically religious souls from the spurious souls who pretend to be religious as most of us do. We go about talking religion but denying God in every act which we do, paying our courtship to the world, the flesh and the devil. We accept God in theory, but deny him in practice. But a man who has realized God becomes incapable of doing anything which is undivine or irreligious. It is not possible. He has psychologically died to any kind of egoism or sin. That experience has made him a new being altogether, seeing with different eyes, feeling with different hearts, and his heart beating in sympathy with every kind of suffering, which we come across in this world.

So his spirit of science was satisfied, because here was a man who told him that God is a fact, is a reality, is something which we can experience. Facts are given to us. Theories are framed by us. Theories may change, but facts don't change. Here is the ultimate fact, the one supreme fact of the reality of God. It was accepted by Sri Ramakrishna and accepted by Vivekananda. How can we get it? It is not something which we can buy in a store or read in a book. It is something which we have to realize by a complete refashioning of our nature, remaking of ourselves. It is a difficult process. It is not something which we can come across by any cheap and easy method. He passed through spiritual exercises, practised meditation till at last he was able also to say, "I have felt the reality of God. I have seen God." That was the kind of experience which Swami Vivekananda was able to accept. The touch of Sri Ramakrishna made him into a different being, gave to him the vision, the divine eye, *divyacakṣus* दिव्यचक्षुस् by which we are able to apprehend the Truth or the Ultimate Reality or the Supreme. Science, therefore, in him was satisfied. Religion, he knew, talked in a hundred different ways. What is it that we can say of this sensed reality, of that experienced reality, of that which we feel in our hearts? What is it we can say if we see a beautiful sunset? We say, it is beautiful. But to describe it in words will test you a lot. You can never bring out the beauty of a sunset by a series of words. It is something one has to see, if one is to appreciate its beauty; so also, the immensity of God, the mysteriousness of God is something which we can only see by ourselves. Other people may lead us but each one has to exercise the vision for himself. He has to see the reality for himself. There can be no such thing as vicarious seeing of God through other people's eyes. Each one has to see it himself. Such a reality can't be described in words. You have a Tamil song which I once upon a time heard :

யாருக்குத்தான் தெரியும் அவர் பெருமை
அம்பல நாடகமாடிய மகிமை

Who knows the glory of the divine, the greatness of the divine, that reality which is so immense, so great, so transcendent to the world of space and time! Though it inspires, you can never comprehend it. No man can describe to you the richness of that kind of religious experience. All people have asserted it, not merely our people; they have all asserted that the Supreme Reality cannot be expressed in words, cannot be expressed in logical propositions, but forms are necessary. It is *acintya*, it is *aprameya*, it is *aśareera*, it is *nirvikāra*.

साधकानां सिद्ध्यर्थं ब्रह्मणो रूपकल्पना।

If forms are given to it, it is because forms have to be given to the Supreme for the sake of satisfying the desires, the ambitions of the ordinary people who cannot rise to that immense height of apprehending the Divine face to face. For such people you have to give them pathways, steps, rungs in the ladder. They have to go one by one until they are able to attain that beatitude, that complete merging in the ocean of wisdom and joy. अपारसंवित् सुखसागर।. It is *samvit* संवित् wisdom, सुख joy, सागर ocean, अपार boundless. So, it is that which we have to get at. We cannot get at it by easy methods. But yet people have accepted several forms, have adopted several designs. All these forms are fabricated or made for the purpose of helping.
स च भगवान् ज्ञानैश्वर्य बलवीर्य तेजोभिः सदा सम्पन्नः
त्रिगुणात्मिकां स्वां मायां मूलप्रकृतिं वशीकृत्य अजः
अव्ययो भूतानां हि ईश्वरोऽपि सन् स्वमायया देहवान्
इव जात इव भक्तानुग्रहम् लोकानुग्रहम् कुर्वन् लक्ष्यते ।
It is for the sake of the devotees that we have them. When we know that these are pathways to reality, these are forms which we accept for apprehending the supreme reality, all quarrels about, which way you adopt, which approach, which address you make, these things become utterly irrelevant. So it is, he was able to say in that Chicago Parliament of Religions—'I don't want a Christian to become a Hindu or a Buddhist, or a Hindu or Buddhist to become a Christian. I want each of them to learn from one another and grow according to his own genius and try to understand the fullest implications of his own particular religious idea.' If you are able to do it, the path may turn and twist, but when you reach a hill top, you see, you observe the exact spiritual landscape which is the same whatever pathway you adopted, whatever method of approach you accepted. So he said, 'Friends, we are one in God, in God the Supreme, who is called differently by different people. I don't want you to give up your religion, but I want you to understand other religions. Learn from them, learn from them the tranquil spirit, learn from them patience under suffering, learn the need for calm meditation, learn from others whatever is valuable, whatever is of good report which they are able to give to you.' So religion for him became a kind of an order, a kind of a norm, a kind of a harmony in which all religions have their place, provided you look upon them as partners in a quest, not rivals. The one beyond belongs to us all and it is not something which escapes us, provided our intention is earnest and our endeavour is full and vigorous; we are bound to reach it. Religion is an apprehension of reality. This apprehension is incapable of being expressed by words and propositions. Therefore, don't quarrel about the halting definitions, about imperfect formulations, about the fabrications which we impose. रूपकल्पना। कल्पना *kalpana* was the word used. The forms are imagined by us so as to give expression to it.

The Swami was steeped in the spirit of science, in the spirit of religion and he was thoroughly humanistic in his outlook. What is God? God is there, dwelling in the innermost depths of your being. He is not someone who is residing in the sky above. He is present everywhere. If He is not present everywhere, He is present nowhere and it is that kind of God—Whom you see as omnipresent, as someone Who is there present to everyone, as someone Whom, man feels as a constant companion looking on him, helping him and guiding him in everything he is doing — that Swami Vivekananda believed in and realized. He looked at our country; when he looked at the popular Hinduism of the country, he denounced it, he castigated it. With a spiritual daring, he said: 'My God is the God of the wicked, is the God of the poor, is the God of the neglected masses. I have nothing to do with that God who does not dwell in the ordinary human being.' So he pointed out that the worship of man is the worship of God. The service of man, trying to help him to the best of your ability, is the best kind of service you can render to the divine. Understand that those people who talk about God and neglect the poor, and the down-trodden and don't care about the disinherited and the hurt, are not truly religious, do not truly believe in God. So his religion expressed itself in a spirit of fundamental humanism. As has been said already, that he is not an atheist who does not believe in God, but he is an atheist who does not believe in man. Where is God? God is in man. He is Paramatman. He is not merely Bhagavan, Brahman, he is the supreme soul in you. When you abstract from your outer layers of consciousness, mind and animality, if you withdraw into the centre of your own being, if you build up a shrine of solitude there, you will see there the divine presence. The divine light is there ever shining, ever ready to come to your assistance and help you if only you do this process of abstracting from the outward and getting into the most inward aspect of your nature. Each man is made in the likeness of God. Each one of us is divine यत्र जीवः तत्र शिवः Where there is Jiva there is Śiva. Śiva is not somewhere up. He is there where a human being is.

So we are suffering the retribution on account of our neglecting the masses. What we are doing today is not a matter of charity, it is not a matter of justice. It is a matter of atonement for our past neglect, atonement for our past sin. We have neglected our duty to our fellow human being, to the down-trodden, to our women and to our own people whom we regard as belonging to this caste or that caste. We have done that and we have suffered as the result of it centuries of servitude. If we today do not cast away that kind of prejudice and don't free ourselves from every element of pride, don't become ultimately human, it is impossible for us to call ourselves believers in God. A true servant of God is a servant of the ordinary neglected masses of this country. The religion which Swami Vivekananda taught is a composite of science, religion and humanism. He had immense courage, spiritual daring of an exalted character to look upon that part of the country as a lunatic asylum, where people looked upon other people not only as untouchables but unapproachables. He was able to say, can man indulge in such practices and still believe that he is a believer in God? It is a kind of a sin which deserves that kind of castigation. Even today in spite of all the lessons that have been taught to us by the early sages of the Upaniṣads, by Buddha, Mahavira, Śankaracharya, Nanak, Kabir, Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, we are still the victims of these prejudices, prejudices which make us believe that we are at the top of the world and other people are much below us. We have an arrogance, an unconscious pride, an effortless sense of superiority which we adopt when we deal with other beings which makes us somewhat hateful to those other beings themselves. We must be humble. The first sign of any kind of faith in God is humility. Humility, courage, renunciation, service — these are all the ideals which Swami Vivekananda put before us. Let us, when we are celebrating his centenary, remember the lessons that he taught to us, not merely uttering them, but assimilating them into our very being.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA ON SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

SWAMI PAVITRANANDA

[Swami Pavitrananda is Head of the Vedanta Society, New York. He was President of Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, India, before taking up his work in America. Here in a small compass, he beautifully portrays Swamiji's instructions regarding spiritual life and practice. — *Ed.*]

'Ye divinities on earth, it is a sin to call a man a sinner' — thus spake Swami Vivekananda, in his lecture at the Chicago Parliament of Religions, which was, in a sense, his first public utterance before the world. This also contained the essence of his teachings. This statement contained two ideas — one positive, the other negative. The positive idea is that man is essentially divine. No proof is necessary for that. Truth is its own proof; it does not require a prop to stand upon. If a person cannot see or perceive the truth, it is his own fault. If one cannot perceive the truth, that fact does not detract in any way from the value of the truth itself. So the great Swami said, in his usually strong, definite, unequivocal way, that man is divine. Many will find it difficult to believe; many will be scared by it; and others, brought up in an atmosphere of sin-complex, will call it blasphemous.

But on what basis did Swami Vivekananda make this bold and tremendous statement? It was his direct experience. There is no proof greater than direct experience. Swami Vivekananda personally realized the state of his own divinity, and just like a lion out of its cage, he roared before one and all that every one was divine. By knowing the One, you know the all. The Swami got the knowledge of the One behind all, and knew the nature of all. His realization was so complete and vivid that he could not stand the idea that any one, however low and degraded from the standpoint of social opinion or popular verdict, should think himself, or be considered separate from the Divinity within him. Once he said, 'Do not seek God, but see God.' Where should one seek God? God is all-pervading, God is the Eternal Presence. Just open your eyes and see Him.

If that be true, which it undoubtedly is, it is a wrong idea to call anyone vile or wicked. What one sees, good or bad, in a person is only the outer covering of the Reality within him. That is the garment of the person. That garment changes, but not the man — the Reality. In that sense, to call a man vile or wicked is wrong, is a sin, for it is an untruth, a lie. Thereby you do harm to the person who is struggling with his own ignorance. You do harm not only to that particular individual, you do harm also to the society to which one belongs, you rivet one more chain on the whole world. If one millionth fraction of the whole population of the world would sit down for a while and say, 'Ye who suffer, ye who cry, ye all are divine, ye all are divine,' the face of the world would change in a moment — that was the conviction of Swami Vivekananda, uttered in one of his lectures. That was not only an utterance, not a fruitless conviction either. It was his burning realization which, with his anguished heart, he wanted to pass on to all others.

Is there not wickedness in the world? Do we not meet with plenty of vile and wicked people in life? Yes, there are wicked persons — those who commit horrible deeds. But emphasizing the idea that this person is wicked, that person is wrong, will not help matters. By the repetition of the word darkness, darkness will not go away. Rather, by such repetitions, the terrors of darkness will increase. The remedy against darkness is to bring light. Bring light, and darkness will go away. Darkness, however deep, from however remote a time it may have existed, will instantaneously vanish if light is brought in. The Light of Knowledge is burning within each individual. That Light is veiled in ignorance, is covered up by layers of darkness. In a good person the layers are thin; in a so-called evil person, the layers are thick. That is the difference between persons considered good and bad in society. With the coming of knowledge, both sets of persons will be transformed in a trice. Darkness does not go step by step. When Light is brought, it goes away at once. Swami Vivekananda understood it, knew it, had realized it. Therefore he was desperately eager to remove the conception of sin and wickedness from the minds of men. If all could think in terms of what they really are, in no time they were sure to be transformed. So he emphasized the positive view. It was not an easy optimism of a type cultivated by people who are frightened by the thought of the existence of evil in life and who try to escape by ignoring it. This kind of optimism does not last long because it is only lip-deep. It is only words. Swami Vivekananda's optimism was the outcome of the direct experience of what man is, of the sure knowledge of what life and death are. From the transcendental height he spoke to the people below, to raise them to his own level. Therefore his words are so powerful, have timeless strength.

Swami Vivekananda was fully aware that such a high state cannot be got for the mere asking. It can be got for the mere asking; if one is intense enough in one's yearning for the realization of that state. People are not generally earnest enough in their spiritual pursuits; steady, persevering spiritual practice and discipline are necessary. That means struggle. Struggle is the price one has to pay for success in any endeavour. That is even more true in the field of religion. So he said that one has to pass through the hell of spiritual struggle in order to reach the heaven of peace. The soul has to wrestle and wrestle, and all of a sudden he gets the realization. Then he laughs at the idea that he had to struggle so much for the knowledge which was his own and within himself.

'Mind you,' Swami Vivekananda said, 'the great benefit in this life is struggle. It is through that we pass. If there is any road to Heaven, it is through Hell. Through Hell to Heaven is always the way. When the soul has wrestled with circumstances and has met death—a thousand times death on the way but nothing daunted has struggled forward again and again and yet again — then the soul comes out as a giant and laughs at the ideal he has been struggling for, because he finds how much greater is he than the ideal. I am the end, my own Self, and nothing else, for what is there to compare with my own Self?'[1]

Swami Vivekananda himself was an example of how earnest and intense one can be in search of the knowledge of the Self.

There are many methods of reaching the goal of spiritual life. Swami Vivekananda simplified them into four divisions. According to him: 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divine within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy, by one, or more, or all of these — and be free.'

Technically these are called Bhakti Yoga, Jñāna Yoga, Karma Yoga, and Raja Yoga. Bhakti Yoga is for those who are dualists, or qualified monists. Jñāna Yoga is for the monists. Karma Yoga is not an altogether independent method; it is connected with Bhakti and Jñāna in the beginning and it is practised also after the realization of the goal. For Karma, or works, serve as a method of self-purification and illumined souls also do work for the good of humanity. Raja Yoga, as a method of training the mind for concentration, forms a part of all Yogas, though it itself is an independent philosophical system and method of spiritual practice. While dealing with these Yogas, though Swami Vivekananda did not essentially deviate from the orthodox schools, he, however, always added something of his own, threw new light on the old systems, and interpreted the ancient ideas in modern living language. That is why his discourses on the Yogas, as also on other subjects, are so interesting, inspiring, and appealing to modern minds.

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[1] *Complete Works*, Vol. V, p. 186.

In his discourses on Jñāna Yoga, his interpretation of the complex philosophical word Māyā is highly interesting. He traces the history of the conception of Māyā from the Vedic age and then in modern language he says Māyā is a statement of fact. There are many incongruities in life which none can explain or escape. This is a fact, and Māyā is a statement of this fact, and so on. The highest experience of monism is a state which is not merely an idea, but a reality. Nevertheless, one cannot remain in that state ceaselessly. In that state one loses the body-consciousness completely; but one comes down from that state to the consciousness of body, though that is not exactly like the body-identification of ordinary individuals. To attain to the highest experience, nevertheless, an aspirant has to try to live that idea in his words, thoughts, and deeds. From that principle Swami Vivekananda builds up his idea of practical Vedanta. Man should always try to practise the idea that he is divine —'I am He' or 'Thou art That.' If one constantly remembers that idea, one will manifest great energy, strength, power and perfection. It will not be a case of inflating the ego, which is pseudo-monism. It will be a case of penetrating into one's depth of being, and feeling that all power is within, though not perceived by ordinary persons. Through practice one will find the two selves in oneself — the real self and the apparent self. Even if one does not experience that real self, it is there within one, just as shadows point to the substance. So always fall back upon your source of strength, and cease wailing in weakness and despair.

When talking of Bhakti, or Divine love, Swami Vivekananda would be in an ecstatic condition and the audience would be moved to tears, but he also said that religion was not weeping and wailing, religion was strength, that man was divine, and should always remember his divinity. This is a monistic idea. But Swami Vivekananda recommends this attitude to all — monists or dualists. The same idea he expresses in a dualistic way when he says that one should have faith in oneself first, and then in God. Is not faith in oneself the result of the power of God within one? Leaving aside philosophical subtleties, he would say that infinite power is within all; somehow that power must be called up and awakened. That is what Swami Vivekananda mainly wanted.

The Gītā speaks of Karma Yoga as doing work without attachment to the fruits thereof. Such work, according to the commentaries of Śankarāchārya, brings one purification of heart, which, in turn, leads to the realization of the Self. According to Swami Vivekananda purely unselfish work leads to the goal directly. If one is perfectly unselfish, one has become perfect, because with complete unselfishness, the ego which divides us from the all-pervading Reality is completely gone. And if God is all-pervading, we can serve God directly through our service to one and all.

> 'These are His manifold forms before thee.
> Rejecting them, where seekest thou for God?
>
> Who loves all beings, without distinction.
> He indeed is worshipping best his God.'

This is not a mere poetic fancy, or a stimulating advice for humanitarian work. This is the discovery of a new form of worship— direct and universal. Swami Vivekananda had no sympathy for so-called humanitarian work, for it denies the simple logical deduction from belief in God. If God exists, as He undoubtedly does, He can surely take care of His creation. He does not need the help of you or me for the protection and safety of His created beings. It is blasphemy to think that you can help anybody, or that anyone needs your help. It is a privilege for you to worship God in the poor, the sick, and the distressed through service to them. So serve all in all humility. Be grateful to those who offer you the opportunity to serve the Divine in them. By the same logic the oppressor is to be pitied more than the oppressed, however pitiful may be the lot of the oppressed. For the oppressor does not know that thereby he is oppressing himself. That is his irony of fate. The oppressor and the oppressed, the praiser and the praised, the blamer and the blamed are all one. This is altogether a new gospel of work preached by Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Vivekananda translated into English the aphorisms of Patanjali which he called Raja Yoga or the science of concentration. In his translation he followed the orthodox commentaries, but in many places the ideas were his own. This abstruse subject he made easy to understand and vital withal. Of all his Yoga writings, his book on Raja Yoga is most popular with many, at least in the West. He brings out the subject of Raja Yoga from mystical darkness to the bright light of day and deplores how this grand, rational and practical science has been made into an art of magic by mystery-mongers. His explanations of Prāṇa, Ākasha, Kundalini, Shat-chakra, the control of Psychic Prāṇa are original and marvellous. Here he spoke, one can easily see, from his direct realizations and not from intellect. It is a book of guidance and directions and not of explanation or psychology. And his side remarks are now and then highly inspiring and immensely helpful to one's daily life. For instance, why and how does concentration of the mind lead to the realization of the Self? Why is love all-powerful? How does hatred cause more harm to the person from whom it emanates than to whom it is done?

To quote his own words: '. . . just as in the case of electricity, the modern theory is that the power leaves the dynamo and completes the circle back to the dynamo, so with hate and love; they must come back to the source. Therefore do not hate anybody, because that hatred which comes out from you, must, in the long run, come back to you. If you love, that love will come back to you, completing the circuit. It is as certain as can be, that every bit of hatred that goes out of the heart of a man comes back to him in full force, nothing can stop it; similarly every impulse of love comes back to him.' [2] Many such practical directions can be found.

It is said that a place of pilgrimage reawakens when a man of God visits the place. This is how the sacred places remain the source of spiritual inspiration for ages. The scriptures also become living and revitalized when a man of God throws the light of his experiences on them. Swami Vivekananda brought new life to our old and ancient scriptures.

What happens when one reaches the goal of spiritual life? One's ego is gone, and one experiences and lives on his higher or the real Self. The little prison-house vanishes and one realizes one's universal Self or Eternal Existence, where there is no death, no misery, no conflict or interaction of good and evil. Man is ordinarily bound by time, space and causation. For the man of spiritual realization these bondages are gone and he experiences what is called absolute Freedom, or Liberation from the bondage of matter. That is a state of infinite bliss which words cannot express, thoughts cannot reach. One feels that bliss but one cannot describe it. It is what Swami Vivekananda in his poem on Samadhi says, 'His heart only knows who has felt it — a state beyond the reach of words and thoughts.'

Swami Vivekananda now and then gave out, though casually, glimpses of that state as experienced by himself. In a letter from Alameda, California, dated 18th April 1900, he says:

> 'Oh, it is so calm! My thoughts seem to come from a great, great distance in the interior of my own heart. They seem like faint, distant whispers, and peace is upon everything, sweet, sweet peace. . . .
>
> The world *is*, but not beautiful nor ugly, but as sensations without exciting any emotion. Oh, Joe, the blessedness of it!

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[2] *Complete Works,* Vol. I, p. 196.

Everything is good and beautiful; for things are all losing their relative proportions for me — my body among the first. Om That Existence.'

A few days earlier from the same place he wrote:

> 'Mother is doing Her own work; I do not worry much now. Moths like me die by the thousands every instant. Her work goes on all the same. Glory unto Mother! . . . Alone and drifting about in the will-current of the Mother, has been my whole life. . . . I am free. I am Mother's child. She works. She plays. Why should I plan? What should I plan? Things came and went, just as She liked, without my planning. We are Her automatons. She is the wire-puller.'

Could these be only the personal experiences of an individual soul, without having any repercussions in the outside world? In that case it could be only a form of selfishness, albeit of a higher type. But this is not a case of personal selfish joy. A man with such experiences becomes a blessing to all mankind. The thoughts of such a great soul are more dynamic than the intense activity of a man who has no such high ideal. If one thinks a good thought even in the silence of a cave, that will, in time, sprout forth into activity. For his silent thoughts will influence people.

However, spiritual thoughts have their practical effects, too, on the world and mankind. Spiritual thoughts teach the doctrine of sameness in all things, and in all beings, because the same God is in all. 'Since seeing the Lord equally existent everywhere, he injures not Self by self, and so goes to the highest goal.'

If large numbers of persons realize this ideal, all conflicts in the world will die of themselves and there will be peace on earth. The world develops a sense of inequality in human minds, but real religion teaches equality of all. As a man of God represents the highest ideal of equality in his life, he becomes a power of good to mankind. Hence the utility of true religion.

True religion is universal. It cannot b denominational. True religion is seeing th Divinity in all. God is one. As such th God of the Hindus is the God of the Chri tians, and the God of the Christians cannot b different from the God of the Mohammeda The Light is one, though the lamps are ma The differences are man-made artificiali and illogical. Once Swami Vivekanan wrote in great anguish,

> 'My Master used to say that these nam . . . Hindu, Christian, etc., stand as gre bars to all brotherly feelings between ma and man. We must try to break th down first. They have lost all their goo powers and now only stand as baneful inf ences under whose black magic even th best of us behave like demons.'[3]

In this respect Swami Vivekananda's co viction was so deep, and his realizations s vivid that even bigoted people would find i difficult to resist him, and with the passing o time his words are having more and mo effect. Nowadays any one talking fanatica against any particular religion is considered a betraying a lack of true culture.

The deductions drawn by Swami Viveka nanda from the idea of divinity in man ar highly valuable even to persons who are n particularly interested in religious pursuits. I man is divine, it automatically follows th faith, strength, courage, and infinite power an the constituents of man's life. These are the in one's life even if one does not practise an orthodox religion. The old religion says th a man who does not believe in God is a atheist. Swami Vivekananda said that th man who does not believe in himself is a atheist. Does not an honest atheist wi greater power for good than those whose re gion begins and ends in only lip-worship Thus Swami Vivekananda awakened religio feelings even in the hearts of those who a barred by orthodoxy from the portals o of religion. Since the time Swami Vivek nanda spoke, many so-called atheists, follo ing his message, have become deeply and genuinely religious. Because an honest atheist has the courage of conviction, he follows the light of his conscience and afterwards finds that conscience is the voice of God and develops love for God. Many religious persons talk of God and religion but do not follow in practice what they say. They talk of God but do not show in action that they have any faith in God. They are morally cowards, seek worldly security and are unable to take any risk even for a good and noble cause. Swami Vivekananda had no sympathy for these kinds of people. He wanted young men — bold, strong, virile, who would be ready to face death if need be. For they are truly fit for the realization of God. Have not the Upaniṣads spoken of people — ever optimistic, strong and determined? One of the reasons why Swami Vivekananda loved the Upaniṣads is that they speak of strength and self-confidence. He loved the Kaṭhopaniṣad very much because, in it is found a young aspirant Nachiketa who could go to the God of Death for spiritual knowledge, saying to himself:

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[3] *Complete Works*, Vol. VI, p. 266.

> 'I am the best amongst many.
> I am mediocre amongst many.
> What duties will Death ask me to do?'

He did not say he was nothing, the lowest of all, the worst amongst many, etc. He had not cultivated the habit of self-depreciation or self-denunciation like many so-called religious persons.

True religion requires the transformation of one's entire life and that does not come without hard struggle and complete dedication. One can struggle against overwhelming difficulties if one has the confidence that ultimately one will succeed. Swami Vivekananda placed emphasis also upon physical strength. Many a noble idea bears no fruit because the vehicle is poor in health. With a weak body one easily develops morbid despondency which is a great obstacle to religious life. So he loudly declared that one will reach God more easily or quickly with strong muscles and nerves developed by playing football than through the study of the Gita.

One revolutionary deduction from the spiritual truth of the Divine in man was that one could equally realize God through service to humanity as through prayer, meditation and temple worship. If God could be worshipped in a temple built of brick and mortar, God would be found much more in human forms. 'More minute than the minutest particle, infinitely bigger than the biggest thing, the Self is hidden in the cavity of man's heart,' says the Upaniṣad. So Swami Vivekananda said: Serve the poor, nurse the sick, give education to the uneducated — that will be a better form of worship in the modern age.

This message was greatly needful to India under the existing conditions of the country and appealed tremendously to the younger generation, especially to those who could not fully subscribe to many complexities of orthodox Hinduism. In this form Swami Vivekananda's idea of religion in India was mixed up with patriotism. Many young men were fired with this idea of serving the country. Many organized and joined even revolutionary movements to achieve political independence. It is interesting to note that several of the young men who joined the political movements at first, afterwards dedicated their lives completely to spiritual pursuits when their spiritual interests became deeper. This is a glaring example of how service to man leads to the service to God.

Nowadays it has become a vexed question whether patriotism is co-equal with, or a substitute for, religion, and in many men's minds Swami Vivekananda is viewed more as a lover of his country than a lover of God. Well, whereas with some to serve the suffering people of India is itself a religion, Swami Vivekananda's love for India was a part of his religion, a phase of his love for humanity, and according to his own words, the definition of God was the sum total of all beings. And if those who do not understand religion but believe in patriotism, will serve the cause of the country with complete dedication and earnest sincerity, they will soon find that the ideas of true religion have unconsciously but spontaneously awakened in them and they are on the way to the spiritual realization, that man and God are one. True nationalism leads to internationalism ; true internationalism leads to true love for mankind as a whole ; and true love for humanity leads to the true love of God, or arises from the realization of God as a direct experience in one's life.

The three great elements which constituted the life and message of Swami Vivekananda were his love of God or the realization of the Self, his great compassion, and his strength. One reacted on the others. His life on earth was a long-drawn realization of the Spirit. For a period in his early days, he suffered from conflicts and anguish for the direct experience of God. But that was only temporary. Soon he got the blazing light of the knowledge of the Highest Consciousness which was his home.

He was born with a compassionate heart. With growing years, coming into contact with human suffering, he rebelled against God, as it were. He could not find the reason why in the creation of God there should be so much misery. He considered the world devilish. Afterwards, with his spiritual achievements, he realized that the problem of evil in the world could not be explained on the human plane. Evil can be and must be transcended, but it cannot be explained. Afterwards, his only concern was to lift up the whole of humanity to a plane where evil cannot reach. 'I may have to give up the body,' he once said, 'but I will not rest until each individual finds that he is one with God.'

Strength was a great characteristic of Swami Vivekananda even in his younger days. Afterwards he radiated and scintillated strength. His very presence was strength-giving. Even his prayer to God was not a form of cringing supplication to God, but was the demanding attitude of his birthright. Even in his crises and difficulties he manifested nothing but strength. That became a part of his life, and a vital aspect of the religion he preached.

One who studies Swami Vivekananda and deeply ponders over his thoughts and ideas, cannot help catching these three characteristics. One finds the basis of religion is so rational, clear and living, that one is filled with the intense aspiration of following his precepts. Nay, one feels that those precepts have become almost a realization with one.

But religion did not become a self-centered isolation with him. He invariably was filled with the spirit of love for others and was seized with an aspiration to serve others. And simultaneously one sees the need and naturalness of strength in one's own life. One is fired with a spirit of strength. One catches the contagion of these qualities in one's mind and heart from the message of Swami Vivekananda. We do not say that these influences become at once lasting in their effect on one's life. They tend to disappear. To make them lasting one has to struggle and struggle vigilantly. That is spiritual practice. That is religion. That is what happens in the life of all spiritual aspirants. But in all our struggles and efforts, through all our hope and despair, Swami Vivekananda's message itself will be a source of great strength and power to us. For his message was not different from his life; his words were co-equal with his power and realization.

Despondency is not religion, whatever else it may be. By being pleasant always and smiling, it takes you nearer to God, nearer than any prayer. How can those minds that are gloomy and dull, love? If they talk of love it is false; they want to hurt others. Think of the fanatics; they make the longest faces, and all their religion is to fight against others in word and act. Think of what they have done in the past, and of what they would do now, if they were given a free hand.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

MESSAGE OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA TO MODERN INDIA

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU

[The following is a brief translation of the Presidential speech in Hindi by Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, at a public meeting held in connection with the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda, at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi on March 3, 1963.—*Ed.*]

As we all know, Swami Vivekananda was a unique personality. India has produced great men since ancient times, and Swami Vivekananda is one of them. These great men, these great of all ages, do not grow great simply in air. They grow in their times; they live in their times; and say things that are relevant to their times. They interpret old traditions and old beliefs and apply them to the problems of the new age. It is from this fact that their precepts derive their unusual strength. If we talk to you about old things, you may like them, you may admire them, you may even believe in them, but they have little relevance today. If we talk about the things of the day, as politicians do, you will be interested, as everybody is interested. But these have little depth. They do not move you. They may be interesting but you are likely to forget them after some time. Swami Vivekananda had both of them. He knew of the ancient basis of our approach to things and of our achievements; and he explained them to the people of today and explained to them in their own language. He was surcharged with the lore and learning of India, but he did not confine himself to India alone; it was because of this that his voice was listened to with attention in other lands as well and people there were impressed with what he had to say.

Some one may ask me what do I say to the children. Whom should they look up to for learning things; and there are many things to learn. But it is quite possible that I may not be able to place before them a name from the history of India as apt, as appropriate, as that of Swami Vivekananda. Let us look up to him, let us read him, let us learn from him many things, but above all one—the one for which he was particularly known and which manifested itself as energy, as force, as indomitable strength. Every word of his drips with this energy and he used this energy at such a terrific rate that he died young. He did not complete his 40th year and even prior to that he had shaken the whole of India, and people abroad and created an impression on their minds.

Vivekananda saw that India had degenerated into a weak nation. Indians are intelligent; they are brainy, they become doctors, they become engineers. This is all very good. But they are weak. The foremost quality that a people require is strength. If they do not have it, all their intelligence, all their knowledge becomes ineffective. Therefore the lesson he imparted was of infusing strength in the people, in every individual, in every nook and corner of India. During his short life he went all over India and preached; and what he taught made a powerful impact.

After him came Mahatma Gandhi. He taught us a number of things and the greatest of his teachings was that we remain fearless; the same lesson that Swami Vivekananda taught. Do not be afraid; stand fearless; because to the man who is fearless other things are comparatively easier. If we are afraid, if we are terrified, our intelligence and other faculties tend to weaken. The man who is fearless does not require to hide what he does. I shall say only this to you that you, particularly our youngmen, should get acquainted with the ideas of Swamiji. We cannot be so fortunate as to hear his voice, but we can at least read what he taught and what he wrote, and learn from it. You will find that even his words are packed with vigour. Whoever reads them feels their impact.

Today our country is facing a difficult situation. It is confronted with great problems. We have to resolve them. This cannot be done all at once. There is no magic key which we just turn and the difficulties vanish. It is a great test for us and for our country. We will gradually fulfil this test. Under these circumstances it becomes all the more necessary that we fearlessly stand up to these problems. If we do so, the problems which overawe us, will disappear. On this occasion I shall say that we should receive some light in our hearts from Swamiji. It will make it easier for us to find the way, because, as you know, Swamiji had a combination of both the old and the new.

The greatest problem before India is to arrive at a compromise between the old and the new. We have had our roots in this land for centuries. From a person who always looks up to the ancient we can learn many good things. But we live in the present day world. Even if we want to completely live in the ancient times we cannot do so. It is a different world. If we want to live completely only in the modern age, detached from the roots of ours from which we are derived, without learning from them and without having some sort of understanding of them, we tend to become, in a way, superficial.

Without roots nothing lives. There is no tree without roots. But if we are only roots that will not do and if it is only the upper portion of the tree without roots that will also not do. Both of them are essential. We have to correlate and combine both of them. Old world and ancient ideas, I think, are essential to a new world, which we should understand, and march ahead.

New questions arise and we look for their answers. But I feel this problem is the main problem. If we want to cut off ourselves from the world we can do so. Why should I say that we cannot do it? But I shall tell you what is in my mind, what I think. It appears to me that I have to face the problem that is in the world; and in a way, as far as possible, as much as we can, serve others, our country, our public, or the world, whatever you may like to call it. Because these days all of them are somewhat mixed up. But we can better understand the present and work in it when we know about our roots in the ancient India and profit from them. Swami Vivekananda had both these things. He knew the ancient Indian ideals and learning shaped by our great men and knew the world of today as well. That is why his words have so much power. It is a great idea that the Indian should be energetic, should be forceful. Without energy man is ineffective. I do not mean the physical strength as that of a wrestler, though that is also good; all types of strength are good, strength of heart, strength of mind, a sort of toughness, strength not to bow down before a wrong. We must acquire such a strength. It is then that we will be irresistible in our onward march.

There are numerous problems confronting our country. How are we to overcome them? It will not do only to tackle an enemy who comes from outside. We have to face the attacks and we will face them. But what is more difficult is a determination to face one's own weakness. But it cannot be hidden by shouting. We have to strengthen ourselves first. We must proceed along the correct path and purify our minds. And for doing all these things, as I have told you, the only example that I can place before you, from which children can learn is that of Swami Vivekananda. In him we find all these qualities. In a short span of life how he moved India, not only for a few days, but in a way that the movement still continues even after him. I did not come here to tell you anything. I came to offer my homage to Swamiji and to express the hope that the people of today, of tomorrow, our countrymen, particularly our children and youngmen, will keep before them the example and memory of Swami Vivekananda and learn from his writing and his life.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AS A LEADER OF THOUGHT

SWAMI TAPASYANANDA

[Swami Tapasyananda, a former Editor of the *Vedanta Kesari,* is Head of Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Trivandrum. In this learned article he brings out beautifully Swamiji's contribution to Indian thought, and also the part played by him in resuscitating the Hindu religion, by defining the exact meaning of its vital tenets, which were hopelessly lost in the excrescences that had gathered round them through the ages. — *Ed.*]

Among the great men of India, Swami Vivekananda is unique for the fact that he occupies the first rank both as a teacher of India's ancient spiritual wisdom and as a leader of her modern national aspirations. His public activities extended over a brief span of about ten years only, but during this period he spoke and worked sufficiently to gain for him a front rank among the thinkers and patriots of India.

His main contribution to thought is the re-statement of the principles of the Sanātana Dharma (Eternal Law), which is the correct name for what is known today as Hinduism. Hinduism is a religion without a creed or a personal founder, and its history has an uninterrupted antiquity of about ten millenniums, during which it has absorbed several races and peoples with their own social practices and religious beliefs. As a consequence, it had developed a bewildering overgrowth of cults, myths, rituals and social practices, out of which the ordinary man was finding it difficult, nay, almost impossible, to distinguish the essential principles of his faith. Even erudite Sanskrit Pandits, however competent to expound the abstruse points of Indian Philosophy, found themselves at sea when required to state the principles common to all sects coming under Sanātana Dharma. They always equated Sanātana Dharma with Varṇāshrama Dharma, and thus interpreted a Universal Philosophy of religion as being a social system of hereditary castes and rigid rules of life. They fostered an elaborate system of mythology and rituals divorced from the proper philosophical background which gives them their spiritual significance. As a consequence, a Universal Philosophy was in danger of being understood as a cluster of polytheistic cults, magical rituals and outdated social practices.

This was the situation that confronted the new English-educated generation of Hindus towards the close of the 19th century when Swami Vivekananda appeared before the world. These new generations were not educated in Sanskrit and had therefore no access to the higher philosophies of India. Their English education had given them a historical sense and a rational scientific attitude which made them question every authority that was hitherto held sacrosanct. Many of them found solace in scepticism or in a thoughtless and naive type of materialism, but the more reflective looked with earnestness to their ancient culture for the bread of life. But its custodians had only stones to offer in the shape of caste, mythology and ritualism — a trinity which certainly failed to satisfy these quickened and critical minds. The consequence was that a spiritual vacuum was created in the minds of large sections of people.

If this position has changed considerably today, it is entirely due to the lead given by Swami Vivekananda to Indian thought by his re-statement of the principles of the Sanātana Dharma, distinguishing it from the setting of caste, ritualism and Pouranic cults with which it was inextricably bound. Several others have attempted such re-statements after his time, but his was the first and the most authentic attempt in modern times, and it still stands unexcelled with all the prophetic force and fervour of a new revelation, before which the academic presentation of later writers pale into insignificance. In this respect his pioneering work is comparable only to that of Vyāsa or Śri Śankara — of Vyāsa, who demonstrated the structural unity of Vedic thought, and of Śri Śankara, who systematized and expounded its philosophical implications. In common with these great men Swami Vivekananda too did not propound any new doctrines but claimed only to teach what the great Rishis had taught. But none the less he was original, and that originality lay, as in the case of his great predecessors mentioned, in his capacity to state the doctrine in concepts that link them with current thought and life while at the same time making no compromise in respect of the spiritual values they embody.

Thus the essence of the Universal Philosophy of Religion known as the Vedanta, which of late has been christened as the 'Perennial Philosophy' by Aldous Huxley, has been stated in a very brief, yet comprehensive manner, by the Swami as follows :—

> 1. Each soul is potentially divine ;
>
> 2. The goal is to manifest this divine within by controlling Nature, external and internal ;
>
> 3. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy, by one or more or all of these — and be free ;
>
> 4. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas or rituals or books or temples or forms are but secondary details.

This statement is so simple and brief and the modernity of its tone so apparent that it makes an immediate appeal to any reflective mind of today. And yet it is an uncompromising assertion of the doctrine of the Upaniṣads, and if the great Śankaracharya, who expounded the wisdom of the Upaniṣads in the past, were to come to life today, he would have congratulated its author in unmeasured terms for his faithfulness to Vedantic traditions in his re-statement of the teachings for the comprehension of the modern world.

Much of the eight volumes of Swami Vivekananda's published works is an elaboration of the doctrines implied in this statement. Systematic expositions are contained especially in his learned lectures on Karma Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga and Jnana Yoga, besides dissertations that are scattered everywhere in his general lectures on Hinduism.

Some of the special points in the Swami's exposition of India's spiritual wisdom may be here noted. He accepted that the Sanātana Dharma is based on the Vedas or Revelation and that the Veda is 'Apourusheya' (not man-made), in the sense that it is eternal. By Vedas he meant no books but the eternal spiritual laws which existed even before the Rishis discovered them, just as the Law of Gravitation existed even before its discovery by Newton. The teachings of the Vedas are not dogmas deriving authority from any personality or church. They are spiritual experiences open even today to all men who undergo the necessary training, irrespective of race or country. Records of spiritual experiences show that great minds in other countries and cultures too had identical experiences. Thus the Sanātana Dharma, though based on the Vedas, is eternal and universal. It is also scientific, being based on experience open to all.

The uniqueness of the Vedic doctrine lies in that it takes a man where he is in his spiritual evolution and helps him to progress towards the next stage. Thus no hard and fast dogmas about God and soul are enforced on all alike, because at different stages of growth the angle of vision changes and the evolving individual becomes fit for different conceptions of the ultimate verities. Thus when man is fully body-centred in his conception of himself, he thinks of the Divine as an extra-cosmic Being, and the soul and the Universe as entirely separate from Him. All the dualistic faiths of the world, including the vaunted monotheism of Semetic origin, mark this stage of growth. Further at this stage God is comprehended as power, as the mysterious and the tremendous, and the devotee feels a corresponding religious emotion that has popularly come to be known as 'fear of

God' as contrasted with love of Him. At the next stage of evolution, when love of God develops in the heart, man begins to think of himself as a spiritual being forming a part of Him, and conceives of Him not as an extra-cosmic being, but as the Spirit immanent in all. At the highest stage of development, when thought has developed the capacity to be absolutely dispassionate and impersonal, the aspirant realizes the Divine as his very self, as the substratum of what he and all beings conceive to be their individuality, and is thus established in the sense of non-duality.

It is this apprehension of Divine Immanence in all beings that made the Swami lay down the dictum that every soul is potentially divine. The concept of potentiality alone gives an adequate interpretation of the idea that entities experienced now as tangible and concrete can remain unmanifested and imperceptible in their germinal condition, as if they were not there at all. A tiny banian seed gives no clue to an unfamiliar onlooker regarding the mighty tree that is to come out of it in future. Unseen and unsuspected, its gigantic structure is involved in the almost imperceptible dimensions of the tiny seed. The same is the case with the personality of man. Unknown and unsuspected powers await development in his frail frame, and in his nature, akin to that of a mere animal, lies a Buddha hidden, involved. Evolution is the impulsion of these potential effects to manifest and gain expression. At the lower levels of evolution, this process is accomplished by the slow and unguided processes of Nature. The evolutionary impulse brings out more and more complexity of structures in the organic matter until the living cell is produced. Out of the living cell the same impulse evolves higher and higher forms with structures that are increasingly complex but unified in function. These organized cells, forming into living bodies become the field for the emergence of mind, and in mind the self-conscious Ego, the Jiva, appears. With the appearance of the ego possessed of the powers of self-conscious reason, a new impetus is given to evolutionary impulses. Hitherto higher forms have been evolved by the natural forces working from within and without, and the organism living in harmony with them; but with the advent of the self-conscious reason, a new factor, the self-conscious effort of the ego as also of the community to which that ego belongs, becomes an equally important factor, giving greater direction and speed to the processes of Nature. In place of living in harmony with Nature, the organism begins to struggle against it. The evolutionary impulse manifests as the struggle of the self-conscious ego, to gain mastery over the forces of Nature which seem to stand opposed to it and thwart its urge for freedom and the expression of its higher divine potentialities. Thus, according to Swami Vivekananda, the goal of life at the human level is the manifestation of the soul's inherent Divinity by controlling Nature within and without.

This description of the purpose of life from the Vedantic point of view is perhaps the most comprehensive account of it ever given. It includes all the accomplishments of human endeavour — both the Aparā vidyā and the Parā vidyā. The Nature outside is constituted of the whole of the external environment of man, both physical and social. Physical Nature is controlled through the insight one gains into the working of its laws and applying that knowledge to develop technology, by means of which life is made more secure, leisurely and comfortable, and man is enabled to increase his power by using forces of Nature to secure his ends. His social environment is constituted of his fellow beings and it is by establishing right relationships with them through the development of a healthy society and polity that this part of his environment is controlled. Thus through science and technology, control over external environment as physical Nature is established, while the development of a well-knit society and a well-ordered State contributes to the control of Nature as social environment.

It will thus be seen that the Swami's conception of spiritual evolution was very comprehensive. He was not one of those ascetic thinkers who scorned matter in order to boost up the spirit. The spirit being conditioned by matter in its earthly manifestation, it is incumbent that a healthy and prosperous society has to be developed by man in order that the individuals constituting it may get the physical requirements that form the essential background for higher cultural developments. Thus, science, technology, social and industrial organization, statecraft and all such institutions of man for controlling the natural environment, both physical and social, come within the field of Vedanta. But it must be noted that it forms only its outer field, the inner field being constituted of his efforts to conquer Nature within. The internal environment of man is his own mind. The mastery of it is the main task of culture in its higher spiritual sense and the special field of Vedanta and of every other system of religious ethics and philosophy. The control of external Nature is only an indirect aid, and in a wisely ordered society, the institutions developed by man for effecting this control have to be consciously motivated by the higher aim.

The means of effecting the control of mind or internal Nature and realizing the Divine potentiality of man are what are called the Yogas — Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, Jñāna Yoga and Raja Yoga. These Yogas are based on the three basic faculties of the human mind — feeling, willing and thinking. In each of these Yogas, the culture of one or the other of these plays the dominant role, but what the Swami always pleaded for was a judicious way of culturing the whole man, taking at the same time into account the peculiarities of the individual's nature.

When the Swami uses the word 'religion' in his lectures, he really means Yoga, for to him religion is realization. Yoga is the technique that leads to this realization — the understanding and expression of the Divine possibilities in man. Understood as Yoga, religion becomes more a psychological concept, and ceases to be a mere set of doctrines, observances, associations and allegiances, as commonly understood. These latter are increasingly reduced to the position of symbols, valuable not so much in themselves, but for their capacity to lead the mind of man step by step to that state in which it gets transformed from animality to the state of divine perception and becomes capable of apprehending the Infinite and the Absolute. The self-conscious mind of man has got in it latent powers of apprehension subtler than perception and inference. Just as dead matter has life involved in it, life mind in it, and mind reason in it, so has the self-conscious mind got involved in it the powers of intuition, the faculty of immediate apprehension of the Divine substratum that is the background and basis of the entire cosmic manifestation. The purpose of evolution is thus the emergence of higher and more complete orders of organization which become in turn the base for the release of higher and higher powers of apprehension, until with the emergence of intuition the ego apprehends its substratum, becomes transformed thereby and realizes its true individuality in its universal infinite background. Up to human level evolution is achieved by living in harmony with nature, but with the birth of self-conscious reason it is through the struggle with, and mastery of, the natural environment, both external and internal, that evolution achieves its end.

Religion understood as Yoga is the technique of this self-mastery, which is the same as mastery of Nature within. It ceases to be in conflict with science and becomes the most important factor in the evolution of the race.

Viewed as Yoga, religions cease also to be conflicting among themselves as they do when they are identified exclusively with propositions, events, rituals, institutions and so on. No proposition can exhaust the Infinite and the Absolute, nor any ritual entrap it, and no institution monopolize it. All these are but its symbols, approximations and pointers, very useful in purifying, equipping and guiding the mind of man, but none of them can exclusively contain the Infinite and the Absolute.

LONDON (1896)

The claim that one's own religion alone is true and those of others are false, is like the claim of everyone that his watch is absolutely correct. No watch is in fact so exact. They are all correct in the sense that they point towards an absolutely correct time with varying degrees of error. The same is the case with the claim of any religion to be the exclusive torch-bearer of truth. It explains also how there can be many religions and yet they can all be true. They can all co-exist and grow in their own way, each trying to learn from the other the special excellences for which it is noted.

The practical implications that the Swami has drawn from the doctrine of man's inherent divinity is perhaps his most important contribution to thought. He called this Practical Vedanta. The Swami maintains that if Divinity is our background, our religious faith should be based not on fear, but on a sense of one's inherent strength born of the feeling that one is a child of God. Faith in one's own self, in one's higher nature that forms one's background, is the basis of all spiritual growth. Without this faith, faith in God has no meaning. Sin is tantamount to weakness arising from the denial of one's inherent Divinity and virtue synonymous with strength born of a sense of one's own Divine heritage. Self-confidence, fearlessness, and self-expression become the watchword for man in all fields of life if the Gospel of Practical Vedanta is accepted.

Worship also receives a new meaning. While ritualistic worship and contemplation retain their full validity in spiritual discipline, social service also comes to have an equally important place. Service of man becomes service of God. As God is present in all as the immanent spirit, life of the individual and society is an effort on the part of Nature to manifest that divinity latent in all. If an aspirant maintains this outlook on life and performs his duties towards individuals and society as an offering to the divinity immanent in all, he performs real worship. Practical Vedanta, therefore, converts work into worship.

THE VEDANTIC NATIONALISM OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

T. M. P. MAHADEVAN

[Dr T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., PH.D., is Head of the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras, as well as an author of many books. In this article he deals with nationalism as it emerged in the West and contrasts it with Swamiji's idea of Indian nationalism. He also delineates how Swamiji applied the ideal of Advaita Vedanta for the national regeneration of India. — *Ed.*]

One of the very first nationalist leaders of modern India was Swami Vivekananda; and it is to him that we owe the unique nationalism that is India's.

The spirit of nationalism that arose in Europe at the close of the Middle Ages, and was responsible for the rise of the nation-states in that continent, was by its very nature narrow in its outlook and scope. The states became independent of the Roman Church; each became a self-centred entity with exclusive interests and claims. In course of time, some of the European states grew to be opulent and powerful; they could not contain themselves; and therefore they sprawled into the Orient and Africa, competed with one another in carving out empires; and a few of them — Britain being the foremost — ended by becoming great colonial powers. Thus, European nationalism was primarily a political phenomenon: it enabled its constituents to develop into political states with the power to expand and to be aggressive.

India which was one of the major victims of European expansionism felt helpless against superior might; having conquered India politically, England sought to make a cultural conquest of its people; and with this end in view English education was introduced in the country. The aim of this education was to create a race of Indians who would be — to use an expression of Sir John Woodroffe's — the mānasa-putras (mind-born children) of the English. In order that India could come into its own again, the first task that had to be accomplished was a reconquest of the English-educated sections of the people. They had to be dehypnotised out of their belief that the English were a superior race, and that for India to continue to be a crown-colony would be a blessing. To a certain extent this was done by the pioneers of the present Indian Renaissance like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, and by the publications of the ancient Indian texts by Western Indologists like Max Muller. But the first great dynamic leader of the movement for reawakening was Swami Vivekananda. Not only did he rouse the dormant spirit of India into a sense of her strength and potentialities, but he also made the West recognize the civilizing influence of India abroad in the past and her invaluable legacy which could ensure the human progress of the future. Thus he was the first to fix the tone and tenor of Indian nationalism. It was because his nationalism was rooted in the wisdom of Vedanta that it became unique, and did not set itself against internationalism or the idea of one-world.

September 11, 1893, was an eventful day in the history of India *vis-a-vis* the West, for that was the inauguration day of the Parliament of Religions at Chicago; and on that day Swami Vivekananda, in the short speech that he made, put India in the proper perspective before the peoples of the West. In the very form of salutation to the audience he chose to adopt — 'Sisters and Brothers of America' — there was a whole philosophy contained, the philosophy of universalism as taught by Vedanta. After saluting the youngest of the nations, America, in the name of the most ancient order of monks in the world, the Vedic order of sannyasins, he expounded his thesis, basing it on two illustrative passages taken from the Hindu scriptures. The one from the *Bhagavadgītā* and the other which is a popular prayer, declare that the paths to Godhead may differ, but all of them are efficacious in taking the votary to the goal. The Swami appealed to the representatives of the different religions assembled in the Parliament, and through them, to the wide world, for not only tolerance but also for sympathy for one another's faith. 'We believe not only in universal toleration,' said the Swami, 'but we accept all religions as true. I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth.' He showed how meaningless it was to seek to convert men from one faith into another. The ideal should be that every one progresses in his own faith: a Hindu becomes a better Hindu, a Christian a better Christian, a Muslim a better Muslim. The Swami expressed the hope that the bell that had tolled that morning in honour of the convention might be the death-knell of all persecutions with the sword or with the pen, and of all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal. 'The Parliament of Religions,' he said in conclusion, 'has shown to the world that holiness, purity and charity are not the exclusive possession of any church in the world and that every system has produced men and women of the most exalted character. In the face of this evidence, if anybody dreams of the exclusive survival of his own religion and the destruction of others, he is to be pitied and told that upon the banner of every religion will soon be written, in spite of resistance: "Help and not fight", "Assimilation and not destruction", "Harmony and Peace and not Dissension".'

In the subsequent speeches the Swami made

1963

in the Parliament, and in his public lectures and class-talks later on in America and England, he presented the all-comprehensive philosophy of Vedanta, showed how India's record in religion was grand and glorious, and pointed out that India required at the time, not the import of religion, but the means of physical sustenance of her masses.

On his return to India, Swami Vivekananda made a whirl-wind tour of the country, exhorting the people to cultivate a sense of patriotism and work for the all-round development of India so that the world at large might be benefited. In everyone of his speeches, he made powerful and impassioned appeals to his people to organize themselves, to become strong, and be a nation again; he asked them to realize their own greatness and be proud of their heritage.

'My India arise!' the Swami declared in one of his Madras lectures, 'Where is your vital force? In your Immortal Soul . . . Each nation, like each individual, has one theme in this life, which is its centre, the principal note round which every other note comes to form the harmony. If any nation attempts to throw off its national vitality, the direction which has become its own through the transmission of centuries, that nation dies. In one nation political power is its vitality, as in England. Artistic life in another and so on. In India religious life forms the centre, the keynote of the whole music of national life. And, therefore, if you succeed in the attempt to throw off your religion and take up either politics or society the result will be that you will become extinct. Social reform and politics have to be preached through that vitality of your religion. Every man has to make his own choice; so has every nation. We made our choice ages ago. And it is the faith in an Immortal Soul. I challenge anyone to give it up. How can you change your nature?'

But, religion, the Swami urged, should not be mistaken for weakness. 'What our country now wants,' he said, 'are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills, which nothing can resist, which will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face. That is what we want, and that can only be created, established, and strengthened, by understanding and realizing the ideal of the Advaita, that ideal of the Oneness of all.'

Translating the ideal of Advaita-Vedanta into active nationalism, Swami Vivekananda asked everyone to seek for God, not in the heavens, but in the heart of every being — especially in the poor and the depressed. 'This is the only God that is awake, our own race, everywhere His hands, everywhere His feet, everywhere His ears, He covers everything. All other Gods are sleeping. What vain Gods shall we go after and yet cannot worship the God that we see all round us, the Virāt? When we have worshipped this, we shall be able to worship all other Gods.'

The Swami asked the would-be reformers not to rest till they had done something to raise the masses from their state of misery and squalor. The reformers should go about their tasks not with an air of superior condescension, but in a spirit of service to the Divine. Let them not condemn, but construct. There was no use preaching religion to those that were hungry. Let India become physically strong and materially prosperous through utilizing the Western scientific knowledge and technology.

The supreme aim, however, should be to foster the spirituality of India. Spirituality is the backbone of India. We have never been a conquering race. Our conquests in the past have been spiritual. Other nations, both in the East and the West, have accepted our ideals and concepts. But we never used compulsion. 'We never preached our thoughts with fire and sword.' In his very first public address delivered in the East — in Colombo — Swami Vivekananda declares, 'India's gift to the world is the light spiritual.' And his one burning ambition was that this light should go forth again from India to light a darkening world.

The light spiritual which is the precious possession of India is Vedanta. Vedanta knows no narrowness. 'What can hold any more the allegiance of cultured humanity but the most wonderful, convincing, broadening, and ennobling ideas, that can be found only in that most marvellous product of the soul of man, the wonderful voice of God, the Vedanta,' asks Swami Vivekananda. Vedanta is our national philosophy; in content it is international and universal. Again, in the words of the Swami, 'Vedanta, the philosophy of the Upaniṣads, ...has been the first, as well as the final, thought on the spiritual plane that has ever been vouchsafed to man.'

It is the Vedantic nationalism of Swami Vivekananda, the patriot-monk, that gave the direction to the ethical politics of Mahatma Gandhi by means of which India has become free and independent. It is the Swami's leadership, again that has made India avoid the narrow and dangerous path of arrogant nationalism, and take to the road of peaceful co-existence and co-operative endeavour towards the goal of commonweal (*sarvodaya*) and spiritual unity.

SPIRITUAL VALUES IN EDUCATION

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

[Swami Vimalananda needs no introduction to our readers. His masterly expositions have been regularly appearing in the *Vedanta Kesari.* This article of his substantially forms the paper which he presented to the seminar on 'Spiritual Values in Education' held in connection with the centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda at Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore Dt. from 31-3-63 to 2-4-63 and inaugurated by the President of India. —*Ed.*]

An enquiry into the place of Spiritual Values in Education is supremely important at this juncture of our history, when scientific materialism tries to account for man's behaviour as though he were merely a puppet controlled in all his actions and thoughts by the inexorable laws of Physics and Chemistry and physiological psychology. Mechanistic and deterministic points of view have almost exterminated spiritual and cultural values in many regions of thought and action and modern technological sciences have brought humanity to the brink of a suspected Universal shipwreck. Though India has clung to her ideal of peaceful co-existence, circumstances have compelled her to equip herself scientifically and technologically for keeping in line with the progress of humanity and for ensuring her own protection. As a consequence education in India too, cannot be something very different from what is accepted by the scientific nations of the world.

How Education came to be what it is Today

It is well-known that parents in ancient times instructed their children in the arts and crafts which they were to practise when they attained adulthood. While learning the responsibility of elders the younger generation acquired certain spiritual values through love and sympathy which the ancestor had for the descendant.

Through social diffusion and change later on, vocations multiplied giving rise to communities organized into guilds based on division of labour. Thus education became a specialized profession and knowledge was imparted to new generations based on ancestral usage. The professional teacher was maintained by the voluntary contributions of the community. He taught what he himself had learned from his teachers, and his aim was to make the pupils fit to meet the needs of home and the clan, and what was considered his trans-worldly ends. The best of the pupils was rendered competent to enter the assembly of wise elders, or the court of a king as his minister, or to be his spiritual director. Knowledge was acquired through apprenticeship, and close personal contact gained therefrom helped to keep the precepts and example of the teacher bright before the eyes of the disciples. The *Chandogya Upaniṣad* (7. 8. 1) brings this out vividly in a crisp passage the purport of which reads thus :

> 'When a man has acquired intuitive power by taking proper food, he rises ; rising, he serves ; serving, he approaches nearer ; approaching nearer, he sees, hears, reflects, understands, acts and knows.'

The Upaniṣadic thinkers wished that a youth should have physical and intellectual strength acquired through proper food — we may add that food included mental pabulum also. This gave to the young student agility to serve the superiors and teachers ; service rendered gave the student an opportunity to gain closer contact with the givers of knowledge and make himself dearer to them. Thus coming closer with a concentrated mind, he observed the teacher's acts, reflected and understood the truth, put into practice what has been learned, and experienced the result. There are many touching scenes describing such a relation between the teachers and the taught given in the epics and *purāṇas*.

At that time there was no Intermediary in the Mart of Education

In those early days of education, there was no intermediary between the teacher and the taught. The preceptor was contented with the services of the disciples, or small payments received from them in kind. He formed his own syllabi based on usage ; and he was free to reject or take pupils as he thought fit. Dissemination of knowledge was considered the most meritorious act, and so at great personal sacrifice, and under austere discipline, the teacher himself strove to become an embodiment of learning and wisdom. Such a teacher was eager to share his knowledge with the poor but worthy students without receiving any payment. No wonder such preceptors received divine honours from society, and shed a spiritual halo around them.

The Development of Modern Education

There was undoubtedly great intrinsic worth in the traditional education of India, of which we get shining pictures in books on the subject. It must not, however, be ignored that the scope of the system was very limited, and that only very small number of people were in the region lighted by education and the rest had no intellectual learning, or even higher training in the arts of life. All over the world educational practices were not much different, because times were not mature then for public instruction. Conditions of living were severe, and even communities living in close neighbourhood were cut off from each other for lack of common interests of any abiding nature. Social survival in such a situation was secured through reproduction and transmission of racial traditions in each group. Gradually, increased communication and trade contacts brought greater social diffusion and increased prosperity in many regions. Improvement of education has always depended on improved social conditions and peaceful times. This has happened in all key-places of civilization. Variation from tradition was not frowned upon in prosperity, and in some cases it was encouraged. There was a ferment in the Gangetic Valley when political peace and economic adequacy were made possible under wise Kshatriya kings and merchant princes, at the time of the Upaniṣads and early Buddhism. This happened also in the Periclean Greece, Imperial Rome, and later Europe. It was prosperous economic conditions created through imperialism and industrial revolution that changed the face of education.

Modern education even in Europe is not more than three centuries old. The idea of considering the school as a means of lifting the young, as through a series of locks in a canal, to the then existing level of adult experience had to be partly superseded, when wise experimentalists proposed the scheme of using educational institutions to redirect the level of adult experience itself. Education came to be fashioned as a lever of social advance. Science and technology brought communities and nations to proximity, and knowledge achieved in different branches of human endeavour, down the ages and in diverse regions, was pooled together in the interest of common humanity and further advance. This could not have been done before great political, economic, and technological changes were possible and isolated medieval communities and groups were welded into larger units. Thus education became dynamic in Europe. From there we copied our system in the last century.

As a dynamic social expression, education today is neither recreating the educand in a previously conceived image of perfection, nor merely lifting the young to the level of adult experience. The purpose of education now has come to be recognized as an attempt to adjust the youth to the changing society and environment in which he has to live; and so scientific and technological training has come to occupy the foreground of formal education. Economic and political influences today exercise decisive sway over the whole machinery of public instruction. The teacher and the taught are no more free to choose their aims and methods, and both have to fit into a larger unit and function in a manner completely predetermined by thoughts and forces that shape the State. The sovereign position which education enjoyed in earlier ages had to be abandoned under the impact of economic, political, social, and psychological forces that have newly emerged through mutual action and reaction. Empiricism and rationalism reign supreme in the field of scientific education today, and trans-worldly values are banished beyond its frontiers. Even the social viewpoint, which is often admired, is now rooted in crass naturalism. As I have hinted early, these trends are clearly visible in our own educational practices, as it is inescapable for all progressive people. It is in such a context that we are trying to explore a place spiritual values in Education.

What does 'Spiritual' signify?

Before proceeding further, I wish to exa the meaning of the word spiritual in expression 'Spiritual Values'. I do not k whether there is an exact equivalent for word spiritual in Sanskrit, or other languages of India. *Adhyātma* and *Ādh mika* appear to be not very suitable, beca the word Ātman in philosophic contexts for Reality beyond mind and intellect. Pe haps the concept of *Daivī Sampat* in *Bhagavad Gītā* comes nearest to spirituali

Spiritual and spirituality are purely bib words that have acquired added senses usage. Neither literary usage nor the sensus of religious people give a single f sense to the term. The finer perceptions life are denoted by the word spiritual French usage. In this sense, spirituality is absent in decent art, craft and poetry, even in technology. The American Trans dentalists considered spirituality to be special mark of a superior intellect. If i is taken to be so, ethical values may not a concomitant of spirituality. Christian ev gelists employ the word spirituality to de warmer religious notions. For the first ti the word 'spiritual' appears in the N *Testament* where it stands for the chara of the man who has entered the Kingdom God. Jesus Christ demanded that a man be born again to inherit the Kingdom of G Christian churches would interpret this re as the outcome of the acceptance of the H Spirit. A new birth through interior cult or *samskāra*, is accepted to be the door le ing to spirituality in all the great religions the world. A true spiritual life transce natural life and religious formalism. I m not omit to say here that spiritual life nothing to do with spiritism or spiritualism

Religion and Spirituality

All human knowledge arose in olden ti as part of religion, and so the range of relig was vast. Though the expressions of religion are multitudinous, spirituality may be considered the headquarters of it. The crucial test of religion is spirituality viewed as *anubhūti*, or realization of the higher religious values. The religion of authority is far removed from the religion of the spirit. Spirituality is the mark of a life dedicated to certain principles; and a truly spiritual man is great in deed and truth and not merely in reputation or appearance. To ask for the proof of a Buddha, a Christ, a Śankara, a Ramakrishna, or a Vivekananda would be to ask where the sun is in the sky. The majesty and beauty of spiritual acts proceeding even from much lesser people become evident by themselves. Kindness, tenderness, forgiveness and willingness to communicate knowledge to the ignorant, and not getting weary of doing good, are extolled as spiritual qualities from times immemorial. The genuinely spiritual man weaves the stuff of everyday existence into the tissue of worship. He finds that the true place of the soul of man is in the current of eternal love which sets out from God and returns to God.

A man becomes spiritual only when he is purified, enlightened and transformed. The following words of Swami Vivekananda convey to us a thrill of spiritual power:

> 'Religion is experience. Getting the Lord, we get all. To know God is to utterly sacrifice self. Religion is not intellectual jargon at all, but realization. When a man is under the control of the senses, he is of this world. When he has controlled the senses, he has renounced. There is an ocean of difference between renunciation and idleness. So to see the great facts of religion, the method of those who have already seen must be followed.'

It would be unwise on our part, though it may not be possible to give empirical proof, to cavil at the common conclusions of all great spiritual leaders of humanity.

> 'It is my firm opinion', said Mahatma Gandhi, 'that no culture has treasures so rich as ours. We have not known it. We have been made even to depreciate its study, and depreciate its value. We have almost ceased to live it. An academic grasp without practice behind it is like an embalmed corpse, perhaps lovely to look, but nothing to inspire or ennoble. My religion forbids me to belittle or disregard other cultures, as it insists, under pain of civil suicide, upon imbibing and living my own. Whilst I have freely acknowledged my debt to Western culture, I can say that whatever service I have been able to render to the nation has been due *entirely* to the retention by me of Eastern Culture to the extent it has been possible. I have been thoroughly useless to the masses as an Anglicized, denationalized being, knowing little of, caring less for, and perhaps even despising their ways, habits, thoughts and aspirations..... If India is not to declare spiritual bankruptcy religious instruction of its youths must be held to be at least as necessary as secular instruction.'

In some other contexts Gandhiji expressed:

> 'I acknowledge no other God but the one God of Truth and righteousness. I will not be a traitor to God, to please the whole world. I would not live for a single moment without religion.... My politics and all other activities of mine are derived from my religion. I go further and say that every activity of a man of religion must be derived from his religion, because religion means being bound to God, that is to say God rules your every breath.... I believe in Advaita, I believe in the essential unity of man, and for that matter, of all that lives..... Religion is a heart grasp; it is necessary to do anything in the right manner.'

. It is unnecessary to enlarge here upon the nature and importance of spiritual values and their acceptance by the greatest and the best in the world.

The world as Fact and Value

With the above preamble I would now concentrate upon the thesis that spiritual values must have a place in education lest it may degenerate into scientific bestiality. Science and religion, I believe, are two modes of looking at the universe — the one looks upon it as fact and the other as value. The world as imaged in science is not complete, final or conclusive. Science develops through contact with phenomena, spirituality through introspection and contemplation. Science is deaf to emotional appeal, spirituality is purification, transformation and expansion of emotion. In science, desires must be subordinated to fact and law ; in spirituality desires must be directed to higher and higher values. While science extends and makes precise sensory perception and reasoning, spirituality looks within and utilizes reason to go beyond reason. It is romanticism that is opposed to reason and not spirituality. The experiments and discoveries of science are external to the subject, those of spirituality are within himself, but applicable to life outside. While observation, classification, contrast and abstraction are essential for science, they are only helpful to spirituality. Spirituality does not deny forms from outside, but transcends them from within. Science discovers laws in which fresh observations may create rupture, and the laws themselves may be altered or abandoned ; spirituality, on the other hand, is based on laws that are broad enough to include all fresh data. No man of science is permanently in the scientific mode ; a spiritual man is no more spiritual, if the least of his thoughts and actions fail to comport with his spiritual attitude. The judgments of a scientist as well as of a spiritual man cannot be rated high outside the spheres of both. A man of science believes that human intellect, and powers of reasoning, would rectify all errors committed by man by further application of intellect and reasoning. The spiritual man believes that a message from beyond intellect and reason only can cure the residual errors of the intellect. Despite this contrast, human well-being owes enormously to both. So it should be our endeavour to assure the right place for science and for spiritual values in our education so that it may not be one-sided, mutually cancelling, or self-destructive.

Destructive trends of Science

The ideal for all education is the achievement of a sound mind in a sound body in a sound society. Scientific progress and human welfare can be accomplished only by making an approach to this goal. I believe that mere humanism inspired by scientific naturalism cannot achieve this. Science that is the marvel of enlightened humanity may not decree its own doom by consigning itself to the hand indiscreet politicians. The secrets of annihilation which science has discovered such a tremendous cost were not mean destroy itself. But unless spiritual values acceptable to those who have paid for sci and technology and who therefore contro no assurance can be given on the point must not be forgotten that variation in qua affects the quality of any product, and wh designed often changes the outlook of designer. Science and technology are wedded not only for the production of is essential for the happiness and well-be of humanity, but also to forces that cre organize and sustain those gadgets that sat even man's baser instincts. I quote be from earlier writers, Hobbes, Freud and like, a list of human tendencies that are spiritual and directly contribute to hu misery, and request you to examine advance of scientific naturalism or rat outlook among the educated have helped weed out or suppress them :

1. Natural passions carry men to parti pride, revenge and the like.
2. Self-love make men partial to themse
3. Love of comfort is not compatible consideration for others.
4. It is foolish and dishonest to hoard up than what one can make use of.
5. A fit of anger is a nail in your coff
6. Natural passions keep men mutuall awe ; so they must be tied to the fea punishment lest they rob and spoil another.
7. Men look for respect from others, but they value other men ; from this emulation, quarrel, friction, war.
8. Chief end of civilized society is pres tion of the property of all the members
9. Worth begets envy in baser minds.
10. Greed for gain and power blind m distinction between right and wrong.
11. Ostentatious display of wealth is the powerful incentive to illicit greed for
12. Interlocking groups of selfish men ar to cover up each other's infractions.

13. Rarely a man will do a thing as another man wants, if he has the power to do as he wants.

14. Men can represent by words good in the likeness of evil and evil in the likeness of good, and augment or diminish the apparent greatness of good and evil, disconcerting other men and troubling their peace at pleasure.

15. If we are in a society in which we are compelled to absorb false and lying words, we are unconsciously breathing a poisonous air. We use words without caring to see how they affect those who hear them.

The above gnomic citations from a wide range of writers show that the advance of science and technology have not changed man who is half animal. Perhaps cruelty, crime and fraud have increased in volume and intensity in some areas because of greater subtilty and scientific skill, shared more extensively. In such a situation, a votary of science might reply that when a new economic and social order will be created that will cure all these defects. But a wise observer might say that as long as science whets only materialist greed for personal and social welfare without cultural and spiritual values, human behaviour will remain the same as pictured in the quotations extracted above.

Oneness of All Existence

Let us turn to what a noble soul who prized spiritual values above all else has prescribed for human uplift. Swami Vivekananda declared before a band of young disciples at Thousand Island Park :

> 'Taoists, Confucianists, Buddhists, Hindus, Jews, Mohammedans, Christians, Zoroastrians, all preached the golden rule, and in almost the same words; but only the Hindus have given the *rationale*; because they saw the reason : Man must love others, because these others are himself. There is but One.... Learn to feel yourself in other bodies, to know that we are all one.'

This is the highest value Swamiji asked us to cherish, and in this, I may add, he was only echoing the voice of scores of earlier sages who had the same inner vision. Recent Western thinkers, too, have come to the conviction that morality is fundamentally the expression of humanity as a whole through the individual. How can this world-sense be inculcated, unless we accept a philosophy of education that supports spiritual values? It is said that every suffering individual in this world represents a failure of human wisdom and common humanity. This idea of common humanity cannot be a mathematical addition, but an intuitive spiritual realization that all this is one, past, present and future — *Puruṣa evedam sarvam yad bhūtam yac ca bhavyam.*

This doctrine must be made the pivot on which all types of education must turn ; then only thousands of youngsters that come out of our educational institutions will feel that human birth is for love and service and not merely for pleasures. Then only they will have the mentality to do good irrespective of even the gratitude of the recipient. Then only an inner urge will be felt by them for developing a higher moral nature that will lay the foundation for upright conduct and character, that will make right social combination possible, and right social combination is at the root of the welfare State. An echo of the Puruṣa-sūkta line I quoted is audible in St. Paul's words :

> Whom, therefore, Ye ignorantly worship, Him I declare unto you. He is not far from every one of us. In Him we live and move and have our being.

Tennyson again expressed the same idea when he said, 'closer is He than breathing ; nearer than hands and feet'. Rebellious and restless man has safety only when he realizes the One Reality shining in and through every soul. Every one who receives education, whether technical or philosophical, must bear in mind that neither ambition nor self-interest, neither fame nor power, can be the highest social motive.

I have to make it clear here that if I have uttered any word or placed any personal stress derogatory to what is implied by science, it applies only to scientific technique that is made ancillary to commercial and political passions that increase sensuality and irrationalism of man and not to the true pursuit of science in the temple of truth, undertaken with cultivated detachment and genuine reverence. Great scientists who have sacrificed themselves for the love of man deserve divine honours. Again when I have extolled spiritual values and pleaded for spirituality, I should not be taken to have lent support to all those misguided or unknowing enthusiasts of religion who wittingly or unwittingly bluff others and fool themselves.

Psychic Evolution of the Taught

It is common knowledge that schools and colleges exist to help youngsters to acquire habitual and constructive abilities in order to adjust themselves to, and control, their environments effectively. This is accomplished not merely by external changes and manipulations, but through psychic evolution. Man is made for society as much as for enjoyment of his own refined higher life. Both these ends are achieved by the interaction of self-regarding and other-regarding virtues. Education that does not develop right dispositions must be considered defective. An education that fails to humanize the relation between man and man, whatever else it might have achieved, is no education at all. An education that cannot ensure honesty in governments is dry at the spring. One who cannot say 'to be just is better than being unjust' has wasted his years in schools. Yet we experience this often and in some countries cost of crimes is many times more than cost of education. One who has spiritual convictions does not throw up the hands and say with the psychologist: 'Moral codes demand the impossible, because urges, like the tropical storms, sweep away fragile decisions, determinations and commitments.' The spiritual man believes that faith can move mountains and so he marches to victory, may be through many defects, because his faith in himself is irrevocable, and because the sense of duty arouses in him moral emotions that are invincible. There is an ethics based on desire and an ethics based on renunciation. The one stresses mutual struggle, the other inspires mutual help. The ethics of renunciation emphasizes not the desire of the individual but of society or humanity at large. The ethics of desire entirely relies on statutes and law courts, gaols and the police, mental homes and reformatories for establishing peace and order. Spirituality cannot be equated with asceticism, but it can never be bereft of genuine altruism.

We should do well to make ourselves familiar with the recent penetrating analysis of altruism given by Professor Pitirim Sorokin. It is the sublimity of a given act of love which makes it altruistic. It is callousness of conduct that makes it anti-altruistic. Minimum of altruistic conduct demands: Do good to others, harm none, and render to each his own. A person who exercises his legal rights and performs legal duties when they do not violate his rights and duties, keeps himself just in the margin of altruism. Only when this margin of altruism is transcended and when the individual freely sacrifices his rightful interests in favour of the well-being of another, refrains from harming him, even though his legal rights entitles him to do so, and helping him in various ways, though law does not demand such action, only then real altruism begins. Obligatory legal conduct resulting from external compulsion cannot be altruistic. Genuine altruism is an exalted spiritual value, for the motive of it is pure as it is free from any consideration of pleasure or utility. True friendship which is an absolute end in itself may be contrasted with pseudo-friendship which anticipates pleasure and profit and these may be cited as illustrations respectively of genuine and impure altruism. The sublimest form of altruism knows no difference between friend and enemy; the sage who sees the Self in all is the sublimest altruist. Our education usually inculcates only legal marginal autruism which is often witnessed in social workers and officers rendering certain help by merely performing their duty for which they

1963

are paid. Even that much is not found in hypocritical pseudo-altruism. Unless spiritual values are inculcated in every possible manner from the start of education, genuine altruism can never become a social factor. Perhaps our country and world is today resounding with hypocritical pseudo-altruism — an altruism that is limited within speech reactions and ideology. Real altruism must manifest in overt actions performed freely for its own sake. This is impossible unless graded spiritual values are recognized throughout the process of education.

In the above paragraphs I have accepted the position of Gandhiji who considered morals, ethics and religion to be convertible, and who held that universal essentials of religion must be taught to all. If there are still higher spiritual values, they need not directly come within the sphere of general education. But there is definitely a place for spiritual values in education in so far as character is the backbone of all education. If universities send out physically wrecked, socially dumb, spiritually empty, and vocationally misfit personalities our society can never be sound. This state of affairs can be diminished, or prevented, only by recognizing spiritual values in education through graded moral instruction and training. Economic and political rivalries, crooked politics, national suspicion and jingoism thrive where spiritual values are staved off from education.

Before concluding this paper I would like to give by way of illustration some spiritual and moral values on which we should focus our attention. We should also explore methods for implementing them in our educational institutions. They should find a place in communicative and recreational media also.

1. School children and college students must be taught, with the help of ethical and aesthetic material, the fact that morality is the sum of the preservative instincts of a society and so it should be fostered and strengthened to the best of their capacity.
2. Those who come to educational institutions must be impressed through suggestion and example about the need of their conforming to the rules of life which demand direction of their desires and actions to each other's happiness, at all times and in every case.
3. Education must develop in the educand an intelligent respect for the past culture and achievements of the country, without opposing the new, and must enable him to appreciate and utilize properly the contributions of his ancestors.
4. The ability of the students to discern causes and relate them to effects must be increased so that they may not react to circumstances wrongly or act on false inferences.
5. Natural taste must be stimulated in them from early life to perform duties allotted to them without goading or surveillances and to refrain from appropriating more than each one's fair share of what rightfully belongs to all.
6. That each boy and girl should be given the fullest opportunity for the manifestation of the perfection latent in him or her is not merely political justice, social expediency and economic efficiency, but in accordance with the spiritual principles that would ensure a sound mind.
7. Students should be persuaded and prevented from behaving abnormally and encouraged to behave normally to abnormal circumstances so that equanimity in disposition may be cultivated gradually. Conformity here can be produced only through example, comradeship and discipline.
8. Recognition of spiritual values will be slow or impossible on the part of a person who has no love of punctuality, order, and regularity of habits, who is not prepared to rise equal to chosen and set tasks and who is not willing to labour with his whole might and skill for gaining perfection in every little work undertaken. He who is dependable, disinterested, calm, and completely free from bad manners alone can succeed in this respect.
9. Young men must learn to share with others knowledge as they gain it in a spirit of humility with the conviction that practical ability, character and intellectual powers are earned in the school of experience and are not just endowments.
10. Boys and girls must be encouraged to be profited by the best in all systems of thought and discipline and discouraged to

submit to the opinions, ideas and modes of any particular party or sect and identify themselves with a part forgetting the whole.

11. Though prizes, certificates and decorations may continue in educational institutions, it is necessary to keep before the young continuously the ideal of work done in an impersonal spirit as against egoistic achievements. Further they should be taught that it is not the environment and situation in which the work is placed that makes it great or noble, but the actors' spirit and motive of action.

12. Corruption, fanaticism and misplaced enthusiasm are the opposite of spiritual values and they must be counteracted by honesty, reason and moderation.

13. Leadership of youths should be given due encouragement. But it should be watched carefully so that it may not degenerate into mere holding of power over others and exercise of authority. Leadership must be deemed always as an opportunity for sacrifice. So youths must be persuaded to eschew hysterical exaggeration and all kinds of sensationalism, if spiritual values are to be preserved. Examples of history, literature and social life must show what right leadership implies.

14. Young men should not wear 'egocentric glasses' and lose the objective attitude even to inanimate objects and events as personified enemies. Sense of inferiority and balancing need for recognition resulting from it would develop in them anti-social and unspiritual attitudes. Proper education must protect them from this.

15. All the above points will bear fruit only when right methods of evaluation and correction are introduced early in the educational process. A student who is never trained to discriminate or to be accurate in what he does, who is allowed to do hit-or-miss reading, who is never drilled to concentrate, and who has acquired only slipshod habits and bad manners from early childhood, cannot be made to see spiritual values even when they are before him.

Youths of India and the whole world need a living spirituality, not an otiose theology; they need tested spiritual principles and values which appeal to their imaginations and apply to the solution of problems of life, individual and collective. Religion that gives only lip-service and outer conformity is decaying to the root and from its manure must grow a new order of spiritual relationships that would integrate, revivify, and energize the emerging society. An uncorrupt youth is delighted by the mysteries of the starry sky, enraptured by the beauty of a gorgeous sunset, entranced by the mountain peak and shoreless seas, and enthralled by a marvellous natural spectacle. Such a mind would certainly feel reverence for spiritual and moral values, the beauty of which transcends that of all the rest.

The end and aim of all education, all training is to make the man grow. The man who influences, who throws his magic, as it were, upon his fellow-beings, is a dynamo of power, and when that man is ready, he can do anything and everything he likes; that personality put upon anything will make it work.

* *

We have to give the masses secular education. We have to follow the plan laid down by our ancestors, that is, to bring all the ideals slowly down among the masses. Raise them slowly up, raise them to equality. Impart even secular knowledge through religion. It will, of course, have gradually to be worked out. But if there are enough self-sacrificing young fellows it can be done to-morrow. It all depends on the zeal and self-sacrifice brought to the task.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE PRESENT SITUATION

SWAMI ADIDEVANANDA

[Swami Adidevananda is Head of Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Mangalore. In this article he deals with the present state of the Hindu society and calls for a rethinking of the problems that face it in the light of Swamiji's teachings. — *Ed.*]

> 'Religion and religion alone is the life of India, and when that goes India will die, in spite of politics, in spite of social reforms, in spite of Kubera's wealth poured upon the head of every one of her children.'
>
> —SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Ever since India became free it is pulsating with life and activity everywhere. The five-year plans and other innumerable schemes to promote social progress and better standards of life are being executed. India has taken its place in the comity of nations to maintain international peace and security. After centuries of gloom and despair, the lethargy is disappearing and a new spirit is inspiring the common people. In the telling words of Swami Vivekananda 'the infinite giant is rising to her feet'. But all this new spirit and glorious vision of India's future will have no value if India forgets her fundamental character — that the goal of human history is not the creation of an earthly heaven but the realization of spiritual freedom beyond time and creation. 'The ultimate goal of all mankind, the aim and end of all religions, is but one — reunion with God,' says Swamiji, 'or, what amounts to the same, with the divinity which is in every man's true nature.'

Swami Vivekananda has pointedly drawn our attention to the fact that the life of spirit defies measurement by the material conditions and standards. A most powerful and prosperous nation may be spiritually bankrupt and that a country ground down by poverty and even political subjection may still be spiritually rich and unconquerable. That a conquered country like India could throw up a personality like Sri Ramakrishna is a definitive proof that the soul of India is alive like a burning flame.

Swamiji asserted in most emphatic language the basic principle of Vedanta: that all religions are nothing but different approaches to one and the same Reality and not toleration but positive acceptance of other religions and creeds is a natural consequence that follows from holding such a view. At the same time he pointed that every great religion has a background of myths and rituals which are not essential or vital as far as the core of religion is concerned. Myths, legends and rituals of each religion may differ from each other, but its core, the philisophy based on the practical spiritual experience, runs through all religions, like a thread through the pearls. But myths and rituals, if properly understood, add colour and vigour to the living faiths. Apart from their signification and symbolic value, they embody, as it were, the formless eternal truths. Mistaking the outer bark for the sap, or body for the soul, has been very often the cause for religious fanaticism. Swamiji was the first, in modern times, to interpret Vedanta divested of its mythological, sociological and ritualistic sheaths. Universal religion cannot be established by the eclectic method of selecting such doctrines that pleases one in every school, but by recognizing the common core of religions, namely, the philosophy based on the spiritual experience.

As everyone repeats, unity is the need of the hour. But how are we to establish unity in a country like India with its diverse races, creeds and customs? Free India has demonstrated that neither political methods nor linguistic integration of zones is sufficient to forge the true unity of India.

We have to learn that our country can be united only on the basis of common cultural and spiritual ideals. When Swamiji said that the first plank in the making of future Indians is religious unification he meant it in this internal sense : 'National union in India must be a gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces.' Unity is not possible on the basis of bellicose patriotism or jingoism. Swamiji has a definite solution to the question of the attitude of Hindus to non-Hindu religions. He never believed in external conversion or absorption. But he wanted a Hindu or a Christian or a Muslim to be a better Hindu or Christian or Muslim, representing all that is best in their respective religions. This awareness of higher values inherent in all the great religions of the world will go a long way in forging true organic unity. In response to the liberal outlook of Hinduism it is incumbent on the followers of Christianity and Islam not to insist on their rights of conversion. Forcible conversion has been one of the causes for the communal conflict in India. One can become a Hindu or Christian without changing his external garb. The leavening of Indian culture is a common property of everyone born in this land. The awareness of this fact alone is adequate for uniting all peoples in this subcontinent. As far as the Hindus are concerned they have a special responsibility : They must realize that a strong Hindu society can alone nourish the spiritual traditions of this land which can be traced back to the Vedic period.

During his wanderings through the length and breadth of India Swamiji's keen eyes had observed the customs and manners of various peoples at close quarters. It had enabled him to see life from different angles. The unifying notions he had absorbed at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna, the Prophet of the harmony of religions, were put into practice in his itineracy. He was discovering the inherent value of all the varied peoples and absorbing in his mind the religious and social ideas of each religion and every province. He realized that beneath all the diversity of customs and traditions was the unity of spiritual vision. To him the difference between a Hindu and a non-Hindu was only apparent. He discerned the intimate bond between the philosophy of Sūfism and Vedanta, of pure Christianity and Hinduism. So to Swamiji Hindus, Christians and Muslims were Indians first. In our present situation what India wants is this unitive vision of Swamiji and not superficial or mechanical synthesis based on some form of chauvinism. During his stay in the West he always taught universal principles which made a lasting impression upon those whom he met. Miss Margaret Noble, who later on became famous as Sister Nivedita, was struck with the breadth and depth of Swamiji's spiritual culture and philosophical outlook and was attracted to live intensely the life spiritual.

Raja Ram Mohan Roy was a pioneer in social reform. The Hindu society is grateful to him and others for the abolition of Sati and other harmful customs. Swamiji was not content with the type of social reform done before him ; he wanted it in a deeper sense. Neither widow-marriage nor divorce is important enough as a social reform. He never wanted to replace our harmful customs with equally bad outlandish customs ; for he knew the relative nature of social reform. What is beneficial to Western society may not be desirable to Hindu society. Before Swamiji, and even after him the social reform smacked of imitation and cultural degradation. He asserted that cowardly imitation never makes for progress. Many social reformers then, as now, were ashamed of their culture and wanted to imitate the West. He reminded them in his inimitable way that an ass in a lion's skin never makes a lion, and that when one has begun to be ashamed of his ancestors, the end has come. He wanted us to remember that every man and nation must save themselves without looking to others for help. He laid down that the first qualification of a social reformer must be intense feeling of love and sympathy for the country and its people. He said that before flooding India with socialism and political ideas the spiritual ideals must be broadcast. He wanted a spiritual basis for all social upheavels. He warned us that if we attempt to give a secular image without spiritual ideas the attempt will fail in India. The secret of Mahatma Gandhi's hold on the Indian masses can be directly traced to this truth. The pace of social service in India from Swamiji's standpoint has been not only slow but also ineffective. It looks as if we have been pulling at the oars while the boat was still at anchor. Time has come to set right the defects in our social work, in the light of Swamiji's hints.

A tendency of the present times is to adjust or correlate the principles of Vedanta or Hinduism to scientific thought of the West. While it is necessary to adjust or reinterpret from time to time, social laws and customs to scientific thought, the same cannot be said about the truths of the spirit, which endure for all time requiring no modification at our hands. Śruti has come into the world as an impersonal revelation of Truth : it was given to us by seers as a doctrine of self-realization, not as a theoretical system. Vedanta is the 'Way' to be trodden in practice, not one more speculative system added to the old systems. 'The universe of the senses,' says Swamiji, 'is bounded on both sides by the illimitable, the unknowable and the unknown.' Though enquiries are possible within these bounds, spiritual ventures belong to the Supersensuous which is beyond all reasoning. Each age has its own scientific truths and political and social ideas which become obsolete in the succeeding era. There is no conflict between the spiritual world and empirical world since they deal with different levels of reality. The imperfect knowledge of one need not be the corrective of the other. Swamiji gives a rational interpretation of religion without trying to change the fabric of the Eternal. His interpretation which is in consonance with the truth of the Śrutis, experience and reason has a new value and application to this nuclear age.

Instead of rationalizing religion in the light of scientific thought, if the Hindus develop true spiritual culture it would not only strengthen them individually but also resuscitate their society. It is astonishing to see even the so-called educated people observe a form of static religion and morality without any sort of illumination. Swamiji had no sympathy with this type of religiosity and condemned it in no uncertain terms. Most of them are ignorant of even the basic principles of Hinduism. The children are not instructed even in the rudiments of their religion since their parents or teachers do not know anything. Even the priests are helpless because of their ignorance of the scriptures. Apathy and secularism of Hindu society as a whole is responsible for this condition. A beginning should be made to educate the priests on the proper lines and assure a proper place for them in the society. Swamiji wanted to introduce religious instruction in all schools and colleges. His cherished desire to found a Vedic college has not yet been fulfilled. Secularism which is eating into the vitals of the Hindu society can be thwarted when proper arrangements are made for the spiritual education of our boys and girls. The restlessness, frivolousness and indiscipline of our youth is nothing but the expression of a deep internal conflict which cannot be solved by ordinary negative methods.

Swamiji was very keen that Indians should learn from the West something of their organization, business-methods, science, technology and artifacts without sacrificing their spiritual culture. At the same time he warned them also that machines never made mankind happy and never would make. He wanted them to go out and broadcast to every nation under the sun the glory of spiritual life. Now, unfortunately, we have formed the habit of begging from others without contributing anything in return. The Westerners who come to India want to discover something of the soul of India and not merely see our industrial revolution. It is worth remembering what Swamiji said in this connection : 'The only condition of national life, of awakened and vigorous national life, is the conquest of the world by the Indian thought. This is the only conquest India has done in the past.'

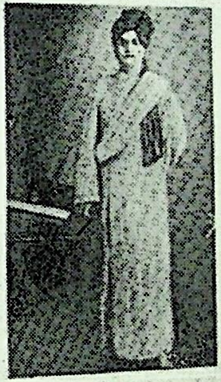
Western achievement in science and technology, great as they are, have disillusioned the thinking people all over the world. The Western ideal to keep up luxury and high standard in life has not solved the problem, but on the contrary, has complicated their life. The evils of materialism cannot be conquered by materialism. The traders in death and destruction have become a menace to humanity. Speaking at Madras Swamiji said : 'The whole of the Western world is on a volcano which may burst tomorrow, go to pieces tomorrow.' How true has been the prophecy ! Since then the volcano in the form of two world wars has erupted, and the third explosion, it is said, will leave no survivor. If human destiny has any purpose or significance it is not too late to heed Swamiji's advice.

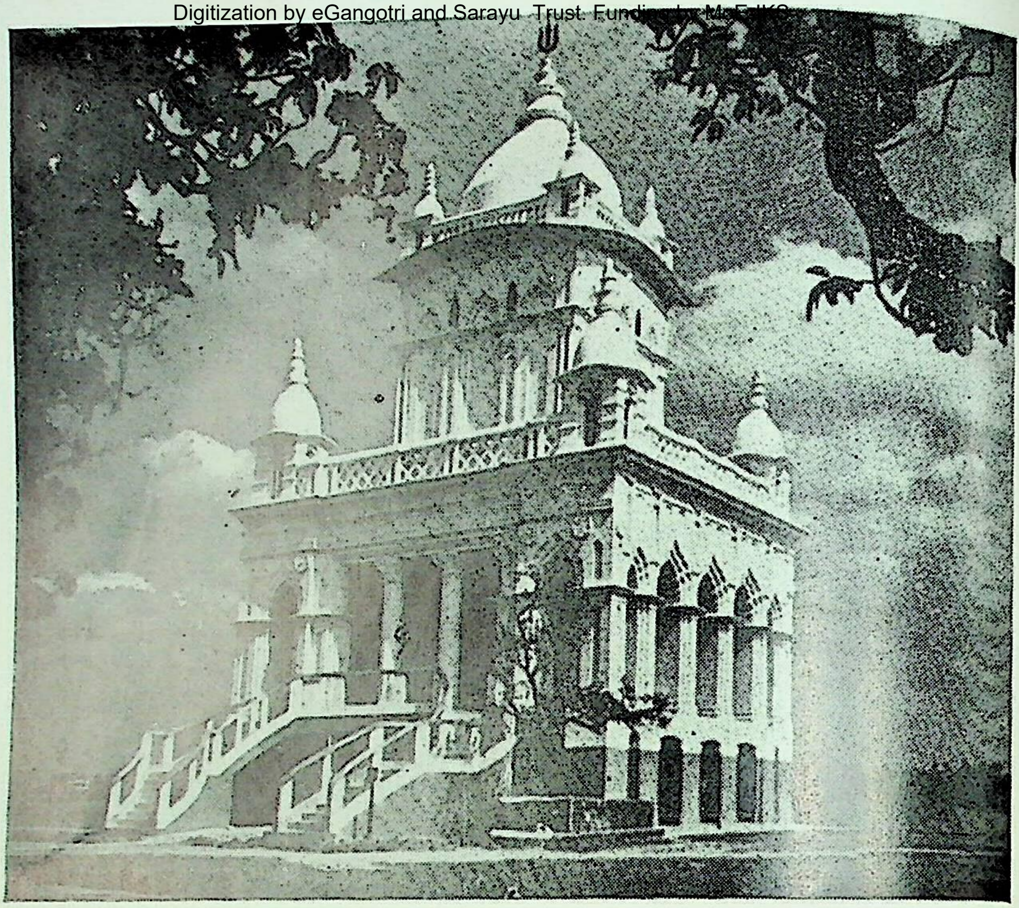
The survey of the present situation will be incomplete if we do not refer to Swamiji's views on caste and socialism in the present context. Swamiji had seen for himself in his wanderings the tyranny of social system as far as the masses were concerned. The caste system, which originally depended on the basis of *guṇa* and *karma*, had now become hopelessly petrified on the basis of birth and heredity. He was convinced that the renaissance of India demanded the dissemination of spiritual culture among all classes and masses. As in the Satya Yuga when there was only one caste, the Brāhmaṇas, he wanted all the castes now also to return to the same condition. His solution was not to downgrade the higher castes, as it is done today, but to upgrade the so-called lower. He declared in emphatic terms that the superman of our ancestors was the Brāhmaṇa. He declared the Brāhmaṇa ideal as one in which worldliness is altogether absent and true wisdom is abundantly present. Though the caste system has become less rigid now, it cannot be said that the problem is satisfactorily solved. Strangely enough it has taken a different turn. The same persons who clamoured for the abolition of caste system want to perpetuate it now in order to secure power and pelf. They want to become permanently backward for the sake of worldly goods. While it is the duty of the upper castes to give up their arrogance and work hard to raise the masses by inculcating culture and knowledge in them, the masses also should rise to the occasion with a view to bettering themselves. Swam also suggested on many an occasion the sprea of Sanskrit language among the masses as potent means of uplift ; for that langua possesses the power to transmute anything i gold. Our educationists have not, unfortuna ly, thought of this linguistic weapon to w off backwardness.

Swamiji during his wanderings in the W had come across Kropotkin and others and h a knowledge of socialism, communism and s other movements. Though these moveme were still in an embryonic state he knew wh was coming. Swamiji knew that the source o the power was in the people and accordingl proclaimed that the labour-classes would be th future ruling power. He had clearly analys that the working classes who produce th wealth of the land are to be reckoned with a not the bourgeois. He even urged the privileg classes to work for the regeneration of th masses so that 'when they will awaken—a awaken one day they must — they also will n forget your good services to them and will r main grateful to you'.

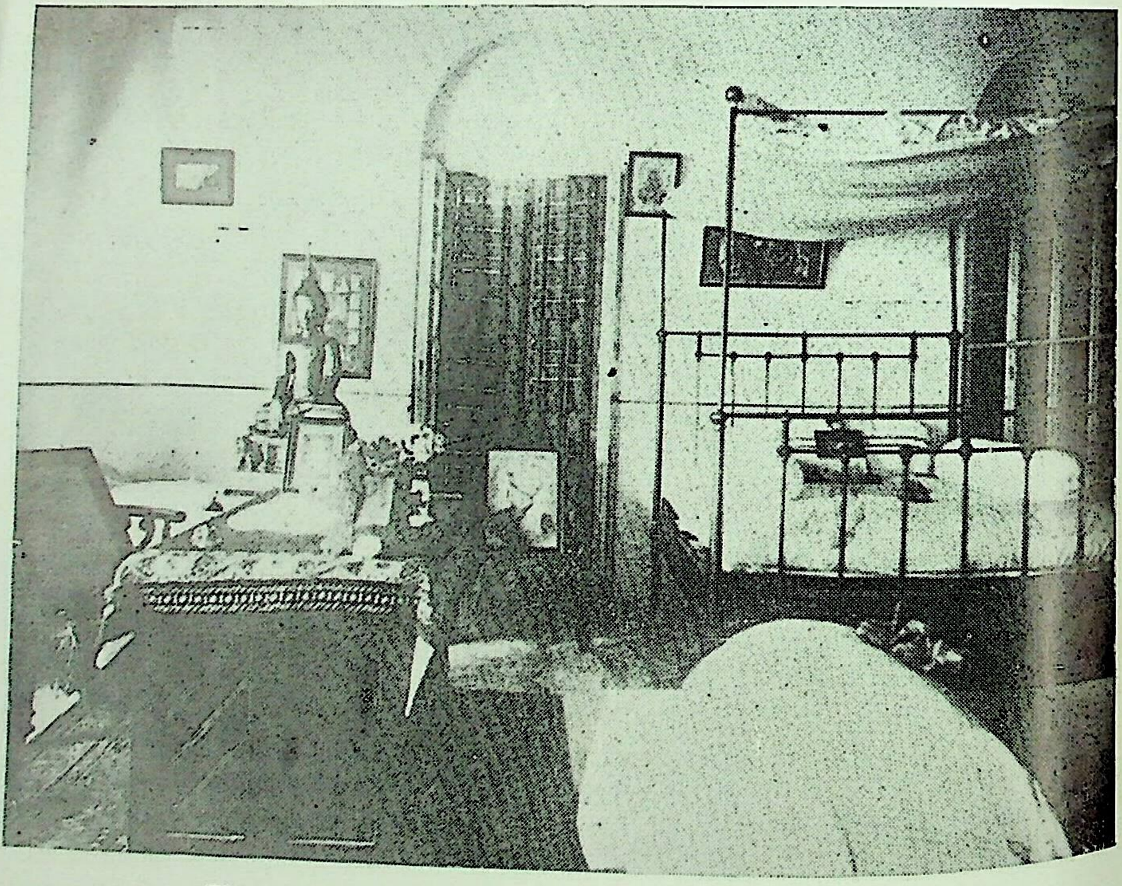
Though the Swami stood for econom betterment and political freedom, he did n think that the panacea would be ushered b these *isms* alone ; for economic socialism wit out cultural socialism degrades humanit Swamiji envisaged a Satya Yuga in whi diversity of capacity and occupation wou remain without the ravages of privilege. I socialism is to be conceived in terms of mate rial betterment alone, the society will be full o crude and violent people without the ex cellence of moral grandeur.

India must progress according to her ow natural character. She can neither be Am ricanized nor Russianized. Swamiji was nev tired of telling that India's backbone is spir tuality, and no scheme of national regenerati can afford to ignore this fact. India must ass milate all that is best in different cultures an civilizations and weave her own pattern. Here lies her salvation.





Swami Vivekananda's Temple at Belur Math on the sacred Ganga.



The room in Belur Math where Swami Vivekananda lived.

FURTHER LIGHT ON SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S INSPIRED TALKS

SWAMI ATMAGHANANANDA

[Swami Atmaghanananda is of the Ramakrishna Order and is connected with the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center, New York. He has done a wonderful service to the readers of Swamiji's works in presenting the original notes of Swamiji's talks at the Thousand Island Park, as it was taken down at that time and by providing explanatory notes wherever necessary to make the original notes intelligible. — *Ed.*]

Among the papers which Miss Josephine MacLeod kept till her death was an ordinary writing pad (measuring about 5½ by 8½ inches) on the cover of which was written:

Notes From Talks by Swami Vivekankanda [*sic*]
copied for Miss McLeod [1]

The forty-nine pages of notes are a fragmentary record of what Swami Vivekananda said in his class talks at Thousand Island Park, New York, during July and the first week of August 1895. The manuscript is in the handwriting of a woman, perhaps past middle age, and appears to have been copied, word for word (including spelling mistakes), from an original set of notes made during Swamiji's talks by a new student not very familiar with Vedāntic terminology. Miss MacLeod, who did not attend the classes, said that the person who made our copy had not been present at Thousand Island Park. As to the original note-taker's identity, none of the list of known disciples who were present satisfies the necessary conditions, except possibly the hostess, Miss Dutcher herself.

Our manuscript may be divided into two unequal sections. In the eighteeen pages covering the entries from July 2 to July 10 occurs much matter not found in Miss S. Ellen Waldo's fuller record extending from June 19 to August 6, published as *Inspired Talks* in 1908. At the same time, the subject matter of each of these entries corresponds with that of the identical dates in this latter work. The remainder of our manuscript, consisting of thirty-one pages, contains scattered quotations from more than half the days from July 11 through August 6 (the last day Swamiji taught). Almost all of these are identical with the corresponding passages from *Inspired Talks*. Of primary interest here are several striking variants from the published text of his talks, undoubtedly derived from Miss Waldo's notes before they were edited for publication. From a close study of our manuscript it appears that the original note-taker began making his (or her) notes on July 2, and after July 10, when the record became more and more scattered and unsatisfactory, stopped making further notes and began copying from Miss Waldo's much more expert ones soon after they were taken down.

Part I of the present paper contains a faithful reproduction of the entries from July 2 through July 10, with a few explanatory footnotes. Editorial punctuation, comment, and emendation are enclosed in square brackets. The text of the remainder of the manuscript is omitted since it is so largely identical with *Inspired Talks*. Part II is an attempt to construct a fuller version of what Swamiji actually said in the class talks from July 2 through July 12,[2] by combining complementary portions of our manuscript with the related text of *Inspired Talks.* The identifying page references are to the seventh edition, published in December 1955 by the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras. The insertions in square brackets are new material from our manuscript; other editorial corrections and rewordings are not generally noted. Where there are two versions of the same sentence Miss Waldo's has usually been preferred. At the end of Part II are added a few of the more significant variants found in the remainder of the manuscript.

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[1] Swamiji's name was originally spelt "Viveankanda," and though a *k* was later inserted in the correct place, the wrongly placed one was left. Miss MacLeod's name is also misspelt.

This reconstruction does not claim to be authoritative, though in most instances the new paragraphs and scattered sentences fit well where they have been inserted into the correspondingly dated entries of *Inspired Talks.* It is offered in the hope of slightly illuminating the already existing text recorded by Miss Waldo.

I

Tuesday [,] July 2ed [*sic*], 1895

Thousand Island Park [,] N.Y.

Notes from talks by

Swami Viveankanda [*sic*]

I was born in one of our sects [.] The Shakta. The Mother Worshippers.

It represents the personal power. In India Mother is the sweetest word we know. There the father does all the punishing that is done.The Mother punishes never.

Mother [,] the Almighty [,] infinite power of love.

The cobra takes good care of her eggs, but as soon as the young begin to come out of the eggs, the mother eats them. The full fledged only get away and live. Ready made they come [,] ready for battle. The idea of Father God seems a lower idea. Mother [,] the first idea of power. Only when she (the Mother manifest whom dualists know as God) opens the door, we shall know ourselves. She [is] the kundilini [*sic*] [.] They believe that those who desire power [,] success, must worship God as Mother.

Bram m [*sic*] is without qualities [,] unknowable.

All manifestation of forces in the world is she.

Peace, life [,] intelligence, and she is person. you and me.

In the universe and not of it. Those married look upon every woman but wife as mother. but those who do not marry look upon all women as she.

She is what the world calls God. The absolute does not create or preserve anything [,] but in another form she does. The sea when calm represents the absolute, the sea in waves the power of the absolute [,] the mother [.]

The word Om means the absolute. The word God is not used in the absolute. The creator is mother.

God [,] nature and soul is the absolute divided into three.

The logos [,] the trinity.

Mother—the Unitarians [.]

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[2] Though the last entry of first section is dated July 10, there are in it some quotations from the two days following (as ascertained by comparing them with *Inspired Talks*), and the dated entries for July 11 and 12 from the second section contain as well several variants worth noting.

Father—Trinitarians [.]
The first step [,] mother,—she created
Father, son and holy ghost [.]

1st the trinity God [,]
beyond that the unity God [,] and beyond yet [*sic*] the absolute.
1st The personal you and I,
2 The personal you and I, yet one—
3 The absolute [,] not you nor I, the impersonal [.]
She (The mother) breathes and you and I are thrown out.
Thus the Shacktas [*sic*] believe [.]
The word mother is like an infinite ocean [.] Ocbud [,][3] the most absolute monarch of India [,] carried his mother on his shoulder[s] through the streets to show his regard for his mother. Men of special power have always been regardful of their mother. thereby taking to themselves a tiny bit of the great mother power.
Mother [,] she holds the power in the universe [.] maya [.] She is the kundilini [*sic*] [.] when she wakes up then can her children have or use power. The Shaktas believe that all success, all good works, all things come through worship of God as Mother. She is life in everything, manifesting as life. she is [a] person [,] in me and outside me. She is at once myself and all the power there is. She talks [.] she can make herself visible in any form at any time.

Worship the Father and you can get the results in a hundred years, if the mother [,] in five minutes. Energy is finale.[4]
Absolute is formless, but when this energy takes form it is called Mother. Water calm is the absolute [.]
When water is disturbed into waves, the moving[,] expressing power is Mother. she is called Time [,] Space, Causation. Om when absolute becomes Hrim when active.
Worship Mother and you will be able to do anything. Buddhas and Christs are little bits of her. She breathes and they all come forth., again [,] and draws them back to herself.
I was a Shakta in my last existence. I love them much. I know it brings great power.
The hardest thing in the world is sympathy with everything, identify onesself [*sic*] with all others in order to rightly understand them.

Wednesday [,] July 3rd [,] 1895

A dualist as a rule is less sympathetic than a monaist [*sic*]. They are tolerant to a certain extent, but being dualists see themselves separate from the universe. Protestants make too much of fleeing from wrath, negation and breaking down. Those who break or correct others['] faults are scarcely fit to build the temple. Thomas à Kempis did not talk against evil, though a great saint. The more holy we grow inside [,] the more holiness we see in the outside world. The more we accuse [,] the more we condem[n] ourselves.
What you see you are inside. He who conquers his own self conquers the whole world.
Condemn or criticise none, it does no good.

Every step gained must be gained by love.
We are born dualists, which is good[.] but through love we learn that we are one. Why attribute veng[e]ance more than robbery to God? He is *all* love. Madness of love

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[3] A phonetic rendering of Akbar, as Swami Vivekananda would have pronounced it.
[4] This is clearly a misreading by the copyist of the word "female" in the original.

should be ours. Dualism[,] beginning and the end[,] must always remain. After a glimpse of the oneness, after *knowing* oneness[,] it objectifies itself to enjoy the pleasure. God separated Himself from Himself to love. I create God in my own image to be my master. He creates me. (Not the Persian king.)
God and I are very good friends. I live with Him, He with me, day and night. Sometimes I scold[5] Him, sometimes He scolds me. Love is the end and aim of the world. Throw yourself into the current[,] saying,—["]Thine, O Thine forever.["] Take, have eternal rest from all doubt, and fear. Why go to the temple[?] See God manifest wherever there is love. The cat for her kittens, look upon them, and then and *there* pray. Wherever love is, there God is. As soon as you say, "I go to seek Him,["] you deny Him, like putting your hands before your face.
Story of the pitcher of milk.
Once a great king was surrounded by many flattering courtiers. One man said to the king; [*sic*] "These men are only flattering you, I will tell you how to learn the truth of their regard for you." "Call them together and tell them you appreciate their deep love for you, and that you wish them to show it, in rather a singular way. A very large tank in a secluded part of your grounds, will be open during a dark night, and every friend of the king is requested to bring a large jug of milk, and pour unseen by any other person into the said tank.["] The king did as the man suggested.
The following morning the king went to the tank and found it filled with water.
Each courtier had thought his jug of water would mix with the milk of the others, and his deception would not be discovered.[6]

Thursday[,] July 4th[,] 1895

Which is the easiest way to know God? Through our own peculiar[,] particular nature. But do not limit yourself by saying; [*sic*] "Christ is all.["] The principle would be lost if all were in the one.

We make our own circumstances and strike off our own chains from our feet. We are the result of our own past[.] Then why not at once take the responcibility [*sic*] of your own past and be glad of the chance to suffer for your past errors, that you may thereby come nearer a true balance, the centre[?]
Cowards can never be saved.
The highest expression of love is unification, in illustration of which he quoted these lines;—

"I first saw him and he saw me[,]
There was a flash of eye from me to him
And from him to me.["]

There was a time when I was a woman and he was a man, then as love grew, I forgot that I was a woman and he was a man. Then farther I cannot see, but one. but I faintly remember a time when we were two, but love came between and fused us into one.

As the Catholic fetters the world by images &c, Protestants do by books. This book worship the greatest tyr[r]any in the world. The divinity of man is proven by his still living, standing, as it were, under the weight of an enormous cathedral on his head with a book on top [of] the cathedral. It is better to start again like the M Isam [*sic*] burning the books, than live under such tyr[r]any.

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[5] Spelt in the manuscript "schold," and afterwards corrected. The same applies to the word "scolds" following.

[6] The story has the sound of a paraphrase rather than of Swami Vivekananda's own words.

Whatever induces freedom is moral and whatever induces bondage is immoral, and a sin: be not bound, come out of it.

So far as this world goes, man is all, if you see beyond, you go out of mind[.] All you understand you make into your world. Human life in its various forms is all the life you know. Even in this life they have conquered the heavens who have attained the sameness. Thus seeing the same Lord present in every being, He no longer kills Himself by Himself. Love is the law of life. Hatred is suicide. If I have not love I am nothing.

A young monk wrote about the age of 16[.] Sankara[.]
Matter and the external world is [*sic*] but the soul in a certain state, but there *is* only *One*. The world is God and is real[,] eternal[,] but that is *not the world we see*. We see silver in the mother of pearl where it is not. We see reality but distorted by the medium through which we see it.
Knowledge of the Absolute depends upon no book, or upon anything[.] it is absolute in itself; no amount of study will give this knowledge. It is not theory, it is religion. ["]Cleanse the dust from the mirror[,] purify your own mind[,] and in a flash you know you are Brahman."[7]
God exists, not birth or death, nor pain nor misery.
We take the rope for the serpent, the error is *ours*.
We can only do good when we *love* the world [as] God, and he reflects our love.
Never approach *any*thing except as God, for if we do, we see bad, because we throw a veil of delusion over it, and then we see evil. Get free from these illusions. Freedom is to *lose all illusions*.
Our own realization is beyond the Vedas, because even they depend upon that. The highest Vedas is [*sic*] the philosophy of the Beyond.

Whatever I get or take from another for help to me, even if it be [from] a wife[,] but hinders my true development. I *must* help myself or I will never be helped, believe in myself or I will never be believed in.

Liberty is nothing more than destruction of ignorance; and perfect destruction of ignorance can only come to us when we know God. *Realized reason is the proof*.

July 10th[,] 1895[,] T. I. Park

The Veidas.[8]

Because God is *in* the perception of every being, — therefore he is capable of the realization of God. thereby do we KNOW God. If Brahmán (absolute) is in the perception of every being, what do we gain or lose by knowing this? We don't necessarily gain *things*, but we gain *ourselves*.

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[7] The quotation mark may indicate either a scriptural quotation or Swami Vivekananda's exact words.

[8] Originally the word was spelt correctly as "Vedas" but later was altered thus.

Knowledge can not be without previous knowledge, therefore knowledge has no begin[n]ing or end.

I cannot explain to you how the Absolute becomes the finite. It is true that the ego to see itself must objectify itself.

Love concentrates easily without much effort of the power of the will.[9]

Give yourself up to him (God) and never question.

In search of one to love I sacrifice myself to Thee, draw me to Thee.

Death being certain[,] it is best to give up life to a high purpose.

The moment you identify yourself with anything but God, misery begins with you.

My mind is the ego objectified, the myself objectified so that I can see I.

No one can say the way to liberty until he *is* liberty itself. He who follows the God of truth[,] to him the God of truth reveals himself.[10]

The Brahm[11] is he whom you can never drive out, even the insane man, or he who dreams, even while he dreams knows that he himself is back of the dreamer. If he thinks himself dead, the thinker stands back of that which died.

So long as you hold yourself separated even by a hair's brea[d]th from the Eternal your fear cannot go.[12]

The ancient Hindus were wonderful scholars, living encyclopedies [*sic*]—they say[:] "Knowledge in books, and money in other people[']s pockets is like no money and no knowledge at all." [13]

(*To be continued*)

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[9] The quotations from here to the end belong for the most part under July 11 and 12.

[10] This sentence occurs in *Inspired Talks* in the entry for July 8.

[11] The original incorrect spelling "Braham" has been thus corrected.

[12] Occurs in *Inspired Talks* in the entry for July 3.

[13] Occurs in *Inspired Talks* in the entry for July 9.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE BUILDING OF MODERN INDIA

SWAMI SATSWARUPANANDA

[Swami Satswarupananda, a great scholar both in Sanskrit and English, is a former Editor of *Prabuddha Bharata*. His learned article touches all points of the social and spiritual life of the country and Swamiji's contribution to them with a thoroughness that makes it interesting and needing deliberation. — *Ed.*]

No scheme for the building of modern India can be regarded as complete, or even comprehensive, if it leaves out some who do not belong to the so-called Hindu fold. And Swami Vivekananda, it appears, has not given us any such scheme wherein, Christians and Muslims, for example, could find an honourable place and work and die for this country of ours. It is an idea which is expressed in some small groups of people in India ; and, though felt with a sigh, it remains unexpressed in much larger groups. The criticism appears true if we do not or would not take the Swami's personality into account.

Let us see if the Swami was against Christ or Christianity. Anyone who has read his lecture, since published in the form of a brochure, on 'Christ the Messenger' would have known what great reverence he had for sweet Jesus. During his itineracy he carried four or five books with him and *Imitation of Christ* was one of them. And he had so great love for the book that he started translating it, a few chapters of which were published in the Bengali monthly, *Udbodhan*. Even in those days when there was a chorus of criticism against the Swami during his stay in U.S.A. from the interested Christian missionaries he counted quite a number of liberal missionaries as his friends. Against the calumnies that many Christian missionaries in our country heaped on Indian Culture and civilization he did speak some harsh words. But never was his criticism directed against the personality of Christ or the way of life advocated by him or preached by his apostles and saints. Had he done so he would have denied his *guru*, Sri Ramakrishna, whose mystic oneness with the Christ would then have been meaningless — he would not have been the true voice of his Guru, which we all believe him to be. To the last days of his life he retained his highest admiration for two personalities, those of Buddha and Christ.

In fact the Swami had no hatred for any faith or custom. He was of opinion that even those rites and customs which appear to be diabolical at present also served some purpose at one time and lifted up some groups of people. As such, he was of the opinion that, instead of heaping abuses on them we should have respect for and gratitude to them. If he had any hatred at all it was against one thing only, bigotry of all kinds. And he declared himself to be a crusader against it. Did he spare his Hindu religion or even India for whom he lived and died? He was merciless in his denunciation of bigotry wherever it was found or even lurked. How often did he take the novitiates in the Belur Math to task for their slightest leanings towards bigotry in matters social and religious!

Similar was his attitude towards the faith of the Prophet. He might be called a born Sūfī. He inherited his respect for Sūfīsm from his

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NOTE: At first the writer of this article started giving references from the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* in support of his views. They came to be so numerous that he felt that the attention of the reader was sure to be constantly distracted by the footnotes, and consequently omitted them all. His advice to the readers therefore is to kindly go through the small book *Swami Vivekananda on India and Her Problems* compiled by Swami Nirvedananda. The whole book is in the language of Swami Vivekananda arranged topically. At the end of the book references to the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* have been given.

father, Viśwanāth Datta. He got it also from his spiritual father, Sri Ramakrishna. He was temperamentally more a Sūfī than a Vedantist, if one is to make a distinction between the two. For the orthodox Islam, here again minus its elements of bigotry, he cherished a high regard. Again and again he pointed out to his disciples the greatest characteristic of the Muslim society — its solidarity and brotherhood. He, no doubt, deplored the mixing up of politics with religion. But was he blind to its necessity at that time? His denunciations were always against this or that peccadillo, not against any personality or any custom as said before. One day during his itineracy he asked an old lady what her religion was, as a reply to that she said, 'By the grace of Allah I am a Muslim'. Hearing this the Swami's eyes glistened with tears of divine love. This would have been impossible if the Swami had cherished any sort of ill will against any sect or faith. There are innumerable instances in his life to prove his wide catholocity, nay, reverence for all ways of life sanctified by age.

How is it that he spoke so little about Indian Christians and Muslims? — This question remains to be answered. By reading the eight volumes of the Swami's complete works any unwary reader will conclude that he was a champion of the Hindu cause only — he did not represent integral India. He spoke volumes about the good points of Hindu religion and society, even going so far as supporting their arrant superstitions; whereas he kept mum over the details, good or bad, of Christian and Muslim religions and societies. This statement, though an exaggeration, contains some truth and needs an explanation for shallow readers of his books.

Swami Vivekananda really represented integral India from the pre-Vedic days to future millennia. He spoke very highly about the Dravidian culture, at a time when researches did not reveal anything great about the Dravids. He was eloquent about Akbar, Shah Jehan, about the Taj Mahal and Mughal painting and architecture as much as about Ashoka, Vikramāditya, the Surya temple of Konarak and the temples of the South, or about the Gothic architecture, Greecian sculpture, Romain painting, etc. And he denounced the hardheartedness, tyranny, social suppression of the masses in all societies, including his own Hindu society. He did not offer any constructive suggestion for the improvement of the Islamic and Christian society except in general terms, because he did not belong to these societies and his suggestions were bound to be misconstrued as undue interference in other's matters. He asked the Hindus to introduce the Western and Islamic social ideal, of valour (which was their Rama's and Krishna's), into their own ideal, of purity, to make their society perfect.

There was another important point in this connexion to note. For about one thousand years the Hindus had been hearing all kinds of criticism against their culture and civilization, their religion and society. Though now and then there arose outstanding intellectual personalities in the Hindu society their propaganda being but temporary outbursts and that too in high intellectual level, they did not reach the ignorant masses, who fell an easy prey to the continuous and systematic propaganda of the Missionaries of the above two faiths, backed as they were then by the political powers. By continuously hearing denunciations of their religion and society for such a long period of time, the Hindus were on the verge of losing faith in themselves and their culture, despite innumerable good points in them. In their desperate attempts to save themselves from these attacks there arose in the latter half of the ninteenth century a number of reformers, who, unfortunately, took to the very same method of hurling abuses at the old Hindu society, as a reaction to which bigoted reactionaries tried to take back the society to more ancient days with their hoary but meaningless customs and rites. As a result the old society got still more divided and confused. This was the condition of the Hindu society which constituted the overwhelming majority community of India. Can a country be integrated and put on the way

(*Continued on Page* 308)

VEDANTA AND VIVEKANANDA

SUNITI KUMAR CHATTERJI

[Dr Suniti Kumar Chatterji, Chairman, Legislative Council, West Bengal, is an erudite scholar and master of several languages. His contact with the Ramakrishna Mission is long-standing. In this article he, almost with a personal touch, exquisitely depicts what Swamiji has done to man the individual, to India and humanity in general. — *Ed.*]

It is a matter of thankfulness and at the same time of great humility for us Indians of the present age that ever since the beginning of her history, it has been given to India to serve Humanity in various ways and to give of her best for the happiness and self-realization of man. India in the past has sought to fulfil her destiny in her own special way, and that was the way of introspection and understanding, of tolerance and acceptance, of peace and co-operation, and of love and service. From the time of the Vedas, which embody the oldest traditions of India about her strivings in the domains of the body, the mind and the spirit, there has been a succession of teachers and leaders, of sages, seers and saints, of men of science and men of thought as well as men of action, the sum total of whose achievements has built up the glory and the grandeur, the splendour and the wonder that is India. The gifts of the spirit rise above all other gifts. And although side by side with the great nations of antiquity and the middle ages, like the Egyptians and the Mesopotamians, the Greeks and the Romans, the Iranians and the Chinese, the Arabs and the Mongols, India has given to the world many things in the spheres of science and technology, of philosophy and letters, and of organization and action, her special contribution has been in the realm of thought and integration. Quite early, from the end of the Vedic period, and during the age of her Upaniṣads, India developed her *Weltanschauung* — her Way of Thought and her Way of Life — her attitude to the two worlds of the Seen and the Unseen. As soon as she realized herself, she brought before the world the Indian Way — *Indianism* or 'the Thought of India in Action', her proper *Dharma* or special character, her *Bhārata-Dharma*. This Indian Way, *Indianism*, or *Bhārata-Dharma*, is established on certain concepts and practices which have been arrived at by intellectual ratiocination as well as mystical intuition, and which have got a universal applicability transcending age, race and clime. India has been thrice blessed in being able, inspite of the vicissitudes of her fortune and her frequent fallings off from the ideal, to maintain the core of her *Bhārata-Dharma*, her Indianness, thanks to the line of great thinkers, teachers and social organizers.

Her Indianness, her *Bhārata-Dharma* or Indianism, according to the expert opinion of those who have devoted their lives in its study, lies in some basic concepts like the following : (1) The concept that there is but one Reality or Essence, which is both immanent and transcendent, within the entire universe, Seen and Unseen ; (2) The individual self is a part of this Reality or Essence, and it is the goal of the individual to realize this ; (3) Indian thought does not give any dogmatic opinion on the nature of this Essence or Reality, and allows the widest latitude of opinion according to man's intellectual or mystical powers of perception ; and this leads to (4) a Great Sense of Tolerance and permits unbounded freedom of thought and worship, without any attempt to force a uniform view-point and practice for all and sundry ; (5) This Essence or Reality can be arrived at by one or more than one or all of the following paths — those of *Jnana* or Knowledge, of *Bhakti* or Faith, of *Karma* or Action, and of *Yoga* or Self-discipline. On the social side, Indianism has, as the result of India's history with its commingling of races, developed the unique System of Caste and of the *āśramas* or stages in a man's life, and its peculiar rituals and cults, which are not considered to be hidebound and unchanging and inexorable. *Karma*, Individual Action and *Samsāra* or Transmigration, *Ahimsa* or non-Injury, the idea of *Puruṣartha* or *summum bonum* in life in which *Dharma* or Righteousness, *Artha* or Wealth, *Kāma* or Enjoyment and *Mokṣa* or the striving for Release from the bonds of life, have each its proper place.

This is the Indian Way of Life. Its greatness lies in its sense of the Essential Oneness of Being : the crux is Integration. The formulation of this basis is found in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, and in the Bhagavad-Gītā of the Mahābhārata — comprising the Vedanta Philosophy of India. There is no system of thought or religion which does not have either a full faith or an undercurrent of belief in some Ultimate Reality behind life, with which the Vedanta spirit is in opposition. For the last 3000 years at least, Vedanta and its ramifications formed the core of Indian spiritual thought. Its value was discovered and demonstrated in India, and it has also been understood and appreciated by thinking spirits outside India. Ideas analogous to it, particularly about the all-comprehensive Oneness of the Reality, have been also arrived at by the finer spirits in many other lands and at different times. Among recent exponents in the West of this ideology which Vedanta has expressed so categorically and with so much conviction is Aldous Hüxley, the English writer and thinker, who has formulated it as the *Perennial Philosophy*. But as said before, it has been in India, and in the lands within the orbit of Indian thought, that this great spirit of Understanding and Toleration with the background of an Essential Unity has been mainly operative. Particularly it was lost sight of in the lands of the West, where the myths of established and organized religion and assertions of dogmatic creeds held sway and clouded the atmosphere of free and untrammelled enquiry.

In India, too, we have occasionally lost sight of the basic traits of Indianism, of *Bhārata-Dharma*. Time and often there has been a necessity for great Teachers, men with the perception of the Essential Unity, the Ultimate Reality, and who are in our common parlance emanations or manifestations of Its light and power, to come and rekindle this sense of the Reality, and of man's essential unity with It. They came, and they gave this teaching each in his own way. The exigencies of the situation and the needs of the men and women of the times determined the language or the metaphor in which they spoke, the outer trappings of the core of truth which they sought to revive. We have thus in India, the *Rishis*, the *Jinas* and the *Buddhas*, the *Bhaktas* and the *Yogis*, the *Nāyanmars* and the *Āzhvars*, the *Sants* and the *Gurus*, as well as the Sufi *Pirs* and *Murshids* with scores of outstanding personalities. Other lands have had their teachers — Akhen-aten, Moses, Isaiah, Lao-tzu, Confucius, Mo-tzu, Zoroaster, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Christ, Muhammad and the mediaeval saints and mystics of Christianity, Islam and Buddhism.

God creates Himself over and over again, to establish and strengthen the true nature of things, the correct vision of life, whenever it is necessary for the good of man — so says the Gītā ; and through divine Providence, this happened in a remarkable way once again in India during the last century, when the twin personalities of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda came into being, and ushered in a renaissance in man's approach to the Reality. It was the old ideology of the saints and sages of India as in the Vedanta and of a number of kindred spirits in other countries.

Vivekananda came at a critical time when India and the World had need of him. Paramahamsa Ramakrishna drew out his dormant faculties—he roused the sleeping lion by giving him what his soul was hankering for most, the realization of the Supreme,—and at the same time impelling him to act in the service of a humanity which was suffering on the one hand (as in India) from social tyranny and from economic and spiritual exploitation, and on the other (as largely in the West) from having lost or obscured what may be called God-consciousness. His own struggles in the quest of the Reality, his contact with his *guru* Ramakrishna, his own experiences of the misery and helplessness of his people and his reaction to it all, which let loose all the pent-up energies of his mind and body to devote himself to their rehabilitation, firstly in the material, intellectual and moral planes and then in the spiritual, made him in a way the greatest leader of India in thought and action during the last hundred and fifty years.

When talking about Vivekananda, one can ask himself: What has Vivekananda done for me? What has he done for my people? and finally, what has he done for Humanity as a whole?

What he has done for me is something intimate and personal, which can only be discussed on some more suitable occasion. But I can give my sincere testimony on one very vital matter for me. Vivekananda, along with Rabindranath, each in his own way and in his own sphere of work, has enabled me to know something of myself — what I am, and what I should try to be, in my physical, mental and spiritual being. It was they who drew me out of intellectual and spiritual inanity towards something positive, something significant and full of value, leading to a desire for understanding and a desire for action. It was their directing me to 'the Perennial Philosophy' that is Vedanta — the Upaniṣads and the Gītā as well as the Wisdom that is in the past achievements of India and the promise that is in her present strivings, that alone helped to establish some kind of mental and spiritual balance in the midst of doubt and despair, and hope and assurance. From my early teens, I was fortunate in reading and pondering over some of the great sayings and writings as well as achievements of Vivekananda, and they helped me in my moral and spiritual being as much as the poems and other writings of Rabindranath, and subsequently the special grace, that was my great good fortune to receive of personal contact with him for a long number of years from 1911 to his passing away in 1941, established me in my intellectual and aesthetic personality, by bringing in questionings and their resolution in an approach through beauty and a sense of the mystic, and in the perception of a universal humanity. Vivekananda and Rabindranath — they were as the life-giving Sun and Water in saving my personality from withering away.

What did Vivekananda do for his people? The testimony is from the people themselves — from the spontaneous homage which men and women of all ranks and ideas are bringing to his memory all over the country. The first thing he did for us as a nation is that he roused us from our stupor, from the *tamas* or darkness of inertia and the occasionally suicidal self-complacency we were in. By his voice of a seer and a prophet he pointed out to us, once again after centuries, the validity for the modern age of a Hinduism based on the Vedanta, which could accept with hospitality all sincere endeavour to know the Reality and to lead the good life anywhere and at any time in the World; and at the same time, he urged upon us, with his burning words, the fire of which often consumed our torpitude and inaction, to be up and doing and make atonement for the injustices done to our brother-man through the misunderstood application of a Philosophy which proclaimed that all men are divine. He was the first in recent years in the history of India to raise a passionate cry for justice being done to the suppressed masses in India, for otherwise we would be doomed; and some of his great speeches and stirring remarks in this regard may be said to form one of the strong bases for the present endeavour in India for the uplift of the masses. From these opinions of his, and his actions, people have been tempted to think that he was more a practical philanthropist and a champion of the oppressed in society than a preacher of spiritual religion. But his spiritualism taught him that Service of Man and Service of God are but complementary to each other — they are the two sides of the same medal : *Karma* or Action in the shape of *Karuṇa* and *Maitṛi* — Universal Love and Good-doing, is but a corollary in this life of *Bhakti* or Faith and *Jnana* or Knowledge. Vivekananda did one great thing for us in all these ways, and particularly by vindicating the Indian Way of Thought and the Indian Attitude to Life in the comity of nations, and compelling attention to it : he put heart in us, and he restored to us our nerves which we were losing. As Sister Nivedita, his great disciple has pointed out, it was Vivekananda who persuaded his people that they no longer had the need to be only on the defensive in preserving their most cherished heritage of philosophy and religion. With the assurance derived from self-knowledge and a knowledge of the world around, the Hindus were to be strengthened into an ardent and a convinced aggressiveness and not to be merely passively apologetic — aggressive, not in a bad sense, but in the sense that a time had come to assert before the world the value of the things, their culture and religion, their thought and action stood for, as something which will benefit man everywhere. He wanted our young men and women to be serious in life, to cultivate courage and strength, and to develop 'muscles of iron, nerves of steel', and he succeeded in filling a number of ardent souls with a portion of his own enthusiasm and will-power, to carry on in a spirit of renunciation the work he started with, his Mission. He was a nationalist to the core of his heart, and at the same time an enlightened internationalist and universalist to whom man everywhere was a part of God. His spirit worked in the resurgence of the Nationalist Movement in India, the Movement for Independence which started with the Swadeshi Ideal and Programme, the First All-India National Upsurge which started a short while after his passing away. With his teaching, young men condemned to death for trying to free the country by violent means boldly mounted the scaffold, with verses from the Gītā on their lips. Those who did not approve of the path of violence were also actuated by the spirit of Vivekananda in welcoming all sorts of suffering in their work of rousing the spirit for service to the people and the country. This was not a mere sentimentalising play with ideas — a mere *bhāva-vilāsa*, as we say in Sanskrit. It brought in self-examination, and spirit of action, one of the results of which was the foundation of the Ramakrishna Mission, with its most significant work in the spheres of both service and rehabilitation of the people on the one hand, and intellectual and spiritual training on the other, which has been of such conspicuous service these 60 years and more in keeping India true to her soul and in helping to bring about an ideological integration of Humanity.

And this brings us to the third question which can be posed : What has Vivekananda done for Humanity ? The reply of course will come from persons who have come in contact with Vivekananda, with his writings and with his work, which was taken up through the Ramakrishna Mission and Vedanta Centres by the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order in different countries of Europe, America and Asia. There cannot be any doubt, as impartial and discriminating persons have agreed, that the participation of Vivekananda at the Parliament of Religions in Chicago in 1893 ushered in quite a revolution in the religious thinking of an important section of persons of culture with the spirit of enquiry in matters relating to the spirit. Europe and America had made phenomenal progress in science and technology and in the arts and literature, but in the basic concepts relating to man and the Unseen Reality, except among a handful of the élite. people were mostly at the foot of the hill, satisfied with their myths and dogmas and narrow notions circumscribed by time and space as being the highest truth, non-conformity with which *ipso facto* condemned man to the wrath of an angry God. What Vivekananda brought was the sweet-reasonableness of Vedanta, that made man everywhere a member of a great fellowship in a quest for the Reality. In place of the arrogance and rejection based on ignorance and buttressed by vested interests, Vivekananda brought humility and understanding taking their stand on the broad basis of a universal humanism. The influence on the minds of soul-hungry seekers after truth was immediate and magical. For over half a century, the leaven of Vedanta has been at work, not only through the study of the Vedanta texts themselves, but also through the example of Vedanta in action as preached through the life of Ramakrishna and of Vivekananda and of his colleagues and successors. The exclusive intolerant attitude of the West to other religions and other forms of spiritual experience is changing, and their attitude to their own is undergoing a 'sea-change'. This is quite patent to anyone who has an occasion to look into the intellectual make-up of the modern cultured or educated man or woman of the West. Slowly and silently a change of mentality for a better understanding is noticeable.

This in itself would be looked upon as Vivekananda's greatest service to Humanity at large. Eloquent testimony has been paid to this great achievement of Vivekananda by a number of writers of the finest cultural attainment in America and in Europe. Witness, for example, the selections of essays and papers on *Vedanta for the Modern Man* and *Vedanta for the West*, and other works published from America and Europe. Vivekananda's influence has been on peoples of countries in Asia like Indonesia and Japan. The message of Vivekananda has just started to work in the mind of Japan, and there is great appreciation for Vivekananda's preaching of the Vedanta in a country which already possesses in its own language translations of the Upaniṣads, the Bhagavad-Gītā and the Brahmasūtras, besides from early times translations of and commentaries on some of the most abstruse Mahāyāna texts which present different facets of the Vedanta in independent ways.

Vivekananda in this way has made the name of his own land thrice blessed, by enabling her through her basic Indianism — her *Bhārata-Dharma*, to be of service to Humanity once again in its spiritual aspiration and endeavour. And for this, a grateful Humanity is joining India in showing honour to a Great Soul, who can very well be considered to be an embodiment of *Bhārata-Dharma*, as his Master Ramakrishna was, so to say, Vedanta incarnate. Vivekananda's is a light which is becoming more and more effulgent, reaching to the distant corners of the earth, a light enabling us to envisage Man as a part of the Divine, which will never be extinguished.

No doubt, the Vedanta says that each one must have his own path, but the path is not the goal. The worship of a God in heaven, and all these things, are not bad, but they are only steps towards the Truth, and not Truth itself. They are good and beautiful, and some wonderful ideas are there, but the Vedanta says at every point, 'My friend, Him whom you are worshipping as unknown, I worship as thee. He whom you are worshipping as unknown and are seeking for, throughout the universe has been with you all the time. You are living through Him, and He is the Eternal Witness of the Universe.'

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA — HIS UNIQUENESS

SWAMI NITYABODHANANDA

[Swami Nityabodhananda, a former Editor of the *Vedanta Kesari,* is now the Head of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, Geneva, Switzerland. He pictures here the uniqueness of Swamiji in giving out his message without 'pushing people to their extreme', and also explains as to how best we can celebrate the great Swami's centenary. — *Ed.*]

A culture or a people throws up a spiritual genius or a prophet and then, as these geniuses and their teachings are far in advance of their times, that culture or people finds it difficult to follow or integrate with their message. Greece, in the sixth century B.C. threw up Socrates. Though in a sense his message 'Know thyself' was contained in the Greek tradition that existed before Socrates, the rigour with which he applied his 'Socratic method' on the people frightened them and created hostility for him and the people who produced this genius condemned him to drink the poison-chalice. The Jews of Israel threw up Christ, but when the Jews found his teachings too revolutionary, they crucified him. The rulers of Israel, got frightened of his 'King of kings' idea, but would not have insisted on his death. But the Jews, his people insisted on his crucifixion.

It is a matter of history that the spirit of the prophets came out more gloriously after the people had perpetrated violence on them. The spirit of Socrates victoriously entered into history through Plato and Aristotle, Socrates' disciples and has come to stay till today. And the spirit of Christ became a world-religion, the religion of compassion and sympathy for evil, for the wrong-doers, which aspect of Christ frightened most his persecutors. It is evident that the prophets made the people contradict themselves. In producing these prophets the people were, as it were, signing a treaty to go according to their directives. And then the people revoke the terms of the treaty they signed. In other words, the past, present and future of the people were condensed in these prophets. When the prophets show the people a vision of the future for which they are not yet ready, they are frightened and they get rid of them. Is it not true to say that the prophets consciously pushed the people to an extreme, introduced a contradiction in the people's consciousness in order to see that the people transcended that contradiction by their own force? Indeed they did transcend. While a section of the Greeks condemned Socrates, the chosen or the elite took up and propagated his teaching and thus transcended the contradiction. While the Jews persecuted Jesus, the other races of the world took up his teaching and thus transcended the contradiction Christ introduced into the consciousness of the people of the world. In both cases the power of introducing contradictions in people's mind is not exhausted. It continues and shall continue till man lasts.

There are three phases to the genius of the prophets; devotion to the past of their culture, a true vision of the future and the ability and patience to guide the transition. It is not enough to have a vision of the future, but one must be patient with the transition. Those prophets who were persecuted were either impatient or shocking to the people when they spoke of the actual state of affairs and thus despaired of the transition. If a prophet is really devoted to the past and enthusiastic about the future he cannot be impatient when he guides the transition. For what is a transition if it is not the preparing of the past and the future and serving them for the present? A transition springs from the past and it eats into the future. A transition is not a fugitive phenomenon. In so far as we have always a past to which we look back for inspiration and a future to which we look with hope to build, a transition that translates the past and the future into the present is an eternal moving reality. In a sense we can say *we* are the transition, we who are between the past and the future. It is the sense of urgency to bring into actuality the best in what was and the best in 'the ought to be'. A leader who understands the transition in this light can never be impatient. He must temper his enthusiasm and idealism by a human understanding of what the people are capable of. Their 'ought to be', though it is 'something new' springs from what they are now. While in his heart of hearts the prophet understands their level, in his outward behaviour he affectionately whips them to go forward, just as a father does with the child. The father's anger or impatience with the child's *status quo* is an enacted drama. Inside himself he is full of sympathy with the child's actual state. His love enables him to keep up the two faces.

Vivekananda was (and is) the prophet of India's transition and herein lies his uniqueness, his greatness. He was proud of her past without being sentimental about it. He was sure of her future without being exalted. He was the past, the future and the transition and the transition was more living than the past and the future. It is glamorous to be the prophet of the future and to whip up popular enthusiasm. It is emotionally enriching and sometimes idle to be a devotee of the past. But it requires quite another genius to be the prophet of transition. There one has to be severe without being severe, one has to push ahead without seeming to push ahead. In other words, one has to take people forward without their being conscious of it. It must be an effortless move.

Yes, it must be an effortless move and that is why Vivekananda never spoke of revolution, but of evolution, not of a revival but of renaissance. For him all true growth must be natural, spontaneous, effortless. It should be from within and not forced. 'Ours is only to put the chemicals together, the result will follow', he used to say.

To speak of revolution during the transition is to lose faith in the people. Those prophets who introduced the element of contradiction in the people's consciousness — and this we say with all respect to them — were impatient of the transition. Their technique was different: they pushed the people to their extreme limits, forced them to see the ugliness of their interior and made them react violently which later on made them compensate for their conduct.

Vivekananda achieved the same result by another technique. He visualized in the transition the power to realize the *yoga-kshema* ideal, the attainment of what one has not (*yoga*) and security in what one has (*kshema*). When the Lord in the Gītā promises the devotee to accomplish for him the *yoga-kshema* it was to awaken him to a sense of his own responsibility. The *yoga-kshema* ideal is not a doctrine of dependence on the Lord, but a doctrine that demands man to realize the urgency of attaining what he has not at the same time maintaining what he has. In India's case Vivekananda saw that India's genius is capable of achieving what she has not, namely scientific and industrial progress, a better standard of life and better productive capacity, keeping all the time her spirituality intact and in graceful dynamism.

This is India's actual problem. India must industrialize, must work to increase her purchasing power, her productive capacity, her total out-put of food. Can she accomplish all that keeping her spirituality intact, without diminution? If Vivekananda were alive and if that question were put to him he would have certainly answered 'yes' and followed up with a condition 'If India keeps her fires at home, the fires of the spirit, burning.'

The nations of the West, those who are friends of India, and who had gone through the age of industrial development are alarmed when they see India getting ready to take her plunge among the machines. They cry out saying: 'There, you are going to lose all your spirituality through science and industry as we have lost.'

If India conceived man simply as an industrial unit or simply as a social or political being, then India would have lost her feet in accepting to be industrialized. But India's concept of man is much more broad-based than all that. For India, man is a spiritual being first and last which means that he has an inherent suppleness and elasticity to adapt himself to changes keeping the essentials. The West is anguished today because the West's concept of man was narrow and rigid and not flexible. Man in the West is unique, but the whole thing hinges on how he is viewing and utilizing this uniqueness. If it is a flexible uniqueness it is spiritual and has no reasons to be broken by the impact of science. If it was spiritual it would have stood by him and not abandoned him in the state of disbelief in which the West finds itself today.

We already said that the uniqueness of Vivekananda was to have led his people in an effortless move by insisting that real growth is from within and not forced from outside. In a century which invested value on things by their capacity to change, it required real courage and insight to say, as Vivekananda did, that real greatness is not in change but in being. 'Be and make', this was how he condensed the whole of Vedanta for India and for the West. If life is taken as the unravelling or unfolding of the spirit, then growth is spontaneous, natural; and changes are phases of the unfolding spirit. This was Vivekananda's view. But if on the other hand one puts the finger of stress on change and not on the spirit that can unfold, then the aspect of being is lost sight of, the aspect of character is lost sight of. One cannot produce character by technique. So then, in an age which gave so much importance to change, to technique, it was capital that Vivekananda as the voice of India laid his finger of emphasis on 'Be and make'.

Vivekananda's move to break India's isolationism should be understood in the context of his fundamental message 'Be and make'. One cannot be what one is essentially, if one believes that isolationism is one's religion. That was what India believed in; she believed in her isolationism, in her 'holier-than-thou' attitude. Vivekananda cried halt to that attitude. He wanted that India should be in the centre of the world, not a proud centre but a smiling, sympathetic and loving mother who is eager to share her joys and sorrows with the nations of the world.

To assure that his ideas as the prophet of transition are carried through as efficaciously as possible he organized an order of monks and charged it with that high responsibility. He knew that monks alone can be uncompromising in regard to ideals and that monks alone can bring about a new creative awareness, a new dimension of spiritual freedom so essential to carry a civilization forward. Sri Śankarāchārya in a certain context remarks that monks and not the laity should be entrusted with the renaissance processes of a culture as they alone can be truly faithful to the tradition and uncompromising in the practice of ideals.

The ideas of all spiritual leaders evolve through time and practice. Vivekananda did not live long enough to see the evolution of his ideas. He left that legacy to us who follow his foot-path. The celebration of the centenary is a propitious moment to see within ourselves and also outside where we have been trying to work out his ideas, how far, to what extent we have been loyal to him and how far we have been original. For, Vivekananda wanted us to be original, to be unique. An originality, a uniqueness which his uniqueness has provoked in us, must have been his cherished dream and is a precious offering we can place at the altar of his memory, before his living presence that continues to energize India.

(CALCUTTA 1897)

'Believe in the infinite soul, the infinite power, which, with concensus of opinion, your books and sages preach. That Ātman which nothing can destroy, in It is infinite power only waiting to be called out.'

(CALIFORNIA 1900)

'Vedanta teaches that you need not even go out of yourself to know the truth. ....Vedanta formulates, not universal brotherhood, but universal oneness. ....Immortality is knowing ourselves as one with all, living in all bodies, perceiving through all minds.'

MYTHICAL RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHICAL FAITH

The Relevance of Vivekananda's Philosophy of Religion

CLARENCE SHUTE

[Dr Clarence Shute, Professor of Philosophy, the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, U.S.A. had written to *the Vedanta Kesari* on a previous occasion, specially about his stay in India and the intimate experiences he had in this country in his article, 'The Unlimited Vision'. In the present article he beautifully portrays how Swami Vivekananda has helped by his life and teachings to wipe out the notion that 'Mythical Religion and Philosophical Faith' were contradictory and also to correlate them. Summing up he says 'Vivekananda is a beacon not for the West alone nor for the East alone but all men' who face the problem of understanding the relationship between the different faiths. — *Ed.*]

The debate which Rudolf Bultmann's essay 'New Testament and Mythology' touched off twenty years ago is of interest to philosophers no less than to theologians. His thesis was simple : the Christian New Testament assumes a mythical cosmology which is meaningless to the modern mind ; this world view hinders the understanding of its message ; the New Testament must therefore be interpreted existentially — that is, the mythical aspect must be displaced by a disclosure of the New Testament's understanding of human nature, man's need, and the redeeming act of God in the event of Jesus Christ.

The controversy which Bultmann inspired reveals a large area of agreement among the disputants. It is agreed that the perennial crisis in the understanding of Christianity has in recent decades become acute, centering in a complex of related questions which concern the nature of religion, the uniqueness of Christianity, and the nature of religious statements.

Our present subject has to do with one aspect of this general crisis of understanding — the tension between the mythical and the philosophical understanding of religion. Even when a mythical cosmology is sincerely abandoned, serious questions remain, two of which I shall discuss in this paper. The first relates to the possibility of translating myth into philosophical language. The second concerns the nature of a particular religion. Is it *wholly* mythical in character, or can we abstract from it certain doctrinal propositions which are either true or false ?

I have chosen to discuss the issue within the context of 'Swami Vivekananda's Impact on Western Philosophy'. Space and the limits of my historical knowledge prevent my attempting to display the Swami's extensive influence in the stimulation and direction of thought with respect to this question which was fundamental to his conception of universal religion. I shall confine my treatment to the clarification which the study of his works brought to my own thinking and in so doing I hope to suggest the inexhaustible wealth of light and inspiration to be found in his writings.

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In a discussion of myth the first essential is to state the writer's conception of myth itself. The extensive researches of the past century have thrown much light on mythical thinking, but it cannot be said that a science of myth has come into being. After all historical researches, the nature of myth is still a question for philosophical interpretation and this is necessarily conditioned by a writer's general philosophical position and his experience of myth. Accordingly, what follows is my own philosophical witness, not the statement of 'assured results'.

It is illuminating to compare myth-making with other activities which are at once both responses to the world and modes of grasping the world. Sense-perception is the spontaneous ordering of events in space and time. Spontaneous, because it arises by nature, not as the result of reflection. And it is an ordering because our sense-perceptions arise *immediately* from the states of our body, not from the external events themselves. That what we actually see is an appearance only is clearly shown by looking into a mirror; we see the image behind the mirror, not at the location of the object which reflects the light rays which enter the eye. This case cannot be assimilated to the ordinary illusion, which vanishes after correction. The displacement of the mirror-image remains regardless of our knowledge of the illusion or our skill in operating with mirrors. A further feature of perception is that the space in which we locate images is a narrowly restricted one. We can get the realistic 'feel' of only a very limited area even when, as in regions of very high mountains, we have come to 'know' (as distinguished from 'perceive') that the distance is great.

Contrasted with this world of perceived objects in actually felt space is the world of objects thought about. We do, indeed, think about the objects which we have perceived; but strictly speaking, to the extent that our object is an object of *thought*, we have left the world of concrete realities for one of abstractions. By doing so we have immensely multiplied the objects of experience. The most obvious example is, again, space. We have exchanged the narrow limits of realistically felt space for the theoretically known structure of an unlimited space.

Now there are persons who believe that Nature is far richer both in itself and in its operation upon us than Nature as it appears in sense-perception and in theoretical understanding. Mystics, sacred and profane, have witnessed to their conviction that the highest realized state of being is an experience akin to perception in its intuitive immediacy but devoid of all sensory content. And it is important to note that mysticism as a type of experience is not restricted to its pure states in the relatively few mystics. Whitehead has argued that the excessive reliance on clear and distinct sense-perception as the basis for understanding the world has led to a completely false metaphysics. Sense-perception is, indeed, the 'appearance' of the present. Outside the bounds of such perception are the massive effects of Nature upon us which do not rise to the level of clear consciousness because they are the constant rather than variable conditions of our existence. I see in this theory of Whitehead a possible clue to the understanding of mysticism, although Whitehead himself, so far as I am aware, did not use it for this purpose. Whether in its pure states or as a factor in less intense experience, we have in mysticism a more direct grasp of reality because it is a state which is *immediately* caused by the pressure of Nature rather than *mediated* by the symbols of sense-perception.

Is there a form of thinking which is adapted to the articulation of these deeper levels of experience? That this is the distinct function of myth is a hypothesis worthy of exploration. Myth is not an attempt to describe the world of natural objects. When it is mistakenly thought to be such it is interpreted as a precursor to science, to be outgrown in the intellectual maturity of a culture. On the contrary, it is an expression of commerce between man and nature which is unique not only because its mode of thought differs from that of science but also because its subject matter is of a different order. It says what it has to say in words which evoke images common to the world of sense but it means something quite different — something which cannot be brought into focus because it does not pertain to the realm of objects but to the realm of subjects. It is describing neither the cosmos external to man nor anything supernatural. It is, rather, building a world the stuff of which lies unidentified in the depths of the human psyche until it is objectified in myth.

This is why genuine myth is not a deliberately contrived product of artistic genius. In a course of historical development it surges

1963

up from within numerous minds, each taking part in its making. With whatever pangs of however long travail, it does come to birth as a living child. It is an individual in its own right, it will live a life of its own, both inspiring and expressing the deepest experiences of countless persons. Its ideas and personalities cut loose from their original moorings and develop like a maturing organism within the experience of each person who takes it to be *his* myth.

With respect to the essential doctrines of Christian faith I have often argued that what happened nineteen centuries ago, in its nature as historical fact, cannot affect me in the present. Unless what happened there and then in some definite sense is happening here and now, the ancient event is irrelevant. I was once asked why, then, I was not content to let Christ join Isis, Osiris, and the other mythical gods and goddesses. I replied that Christ was free to join any company he chose; the question was whether or not he could take me with him. The fact is that Isis and Osiris are not mythical deities for *me* — they are figures in *records* of myth. The words which record a myth, however much they may be enjoyed as literature, are not an actual myth to one for whom they are not an articulation of man's confrontation and participation in a depth of reality which it is impossible to focus in conceptual thought.

I have referred to the view that myth is the precursor of science and is displaced by the latter when theoretical understanding becomes dominant. Actually, the temporal sequence of the origins of myth and science masks their relationship more than it illumines it. It may well be that myth is displaced by science, instead of living together with it, only when the objective, scientific mode of thought has obscured the meaning of subjectivity. Introspection is then taken to be the one mode of knowing the subjective. But introspection only examines inner states of consciousness which, as examined, are as static, as divorced from the distinctive thrust of subjectivity, as any other object. A knowledge of subjectivity may be had only by way of awareness of existing as a subject; and the only way in which the basic features of living subjectivity can be presented in their dynamism is in the spontaneous symbolism of myth.

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I have spoken of the crisis of understanding which Christianity is passing through in the West. Strangely, however, there is an equal crisis in understanding the meaning of contemporary science. Martin Buber spoke of this in the course of his inaugural lectures as Professor of Social Philosophy at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1938.

> '. . .Einstein's concept of the universe signifies no fulfilment of the spirit's inkling, but the contradiction of all its inklings and imaginings: this universe can still be thought, but it can no longer be imaged, the man who thinks it no longer really lives in it. The generation which works modern cosmology into its natural thought will be the first, after several millennia of changing images of the universe, which will have to forego the possession of an image of its universe; this very fact, that it lives in a universe which cannot be imaged, will probably be its feeling of the universe, so to speak its image of the Universe . . .'[1]

Buber's meaning is not entirely clear. But at the very least he is saying that if and when the universe of contemporary science is assimilated in the natural thinking of men, if it still continues to be imaged it will be recognized that image and thought no longer correspond. But can anyone seriously doubt that men *will* continue to image the universe even if they are fully convinced that modern science invalidates the belief that image and conception can be harmonized? And if man continues to need an image of his universe when he knows that it cannot be imaged, it is quite reasonable that he continues to need the images of myth even though he knows that what he means by them can have no image. To forego the concepts of classical science would leave man thinking a universe in which he cannot 'live' as a human being. To forego the images of myth would leave most men similarly shut out from the living reality of the Spirit. We need not fear the first dissociation; men will continue to image the universe because these images are the natural and necessary reaction to our physical environment. But there is no corresponding necessity in the spiritual realm. Here a 'demythologizing' could be successful, to the impoverishment of man's existence.

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[1] Martin Buber, *Between Man and Man*, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London, p. 133.

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The early years of Narendranath Datta (the later Swami Vivekananda) reveal two opposing tendencies, the tension between which made possible much of his, later, best contribution to thought. He had a deep religious nature; on the other hand he had an acute, skeptical mind which challenged both the dualism of Hindu traditional theism and the monism of Advaita Vedanta. The resolution of this conflict came through his association with Sri Ramakrishna. Vivekananda's thinking was transparent and boundlessly spontaneous, and the heat of his religious experience entirely transformed the structure and content of his thought. He came to move with ease and familiarity within and from one to the other of the two realms which I have called mythical religion and philosophical faith. He embraced Advaita Vedanta (after ridiculing it even after his first acquaintance with Sri Ramakrishna). Yet he wrote that

> 'Īśvara, the Personal God, is the highest manifestation of Absolute Reality, or, in other words, the highest possible reading of the Absolute by the human mind.'[2]

The point is that Vivekananda's philosophy of religion embraced two modes of experience (four in his own complete description) in a coherent view. Extrapolation of human thought leads to the Brahman without attributes, as it leads, in Western European thought, to the 'Encompassing' of Karl Jaspers. But the response of the bhakta is spontaneously articulated in anthropomorphic images. Vivekananda shows that this does not in the least imply that these figures are fictions. They are continuous with the fabric of human experience as a whole, which is the only reality accessible to us.

> 'True it is that we cannot have any idea of Brahman which is not anthropomorphic; but is it not equally true of everything we know? The greatest psychologist the world has ever known, Kapila, demonstrated ages ago that human consciousness is one of the elements in the make-up of all the objects of our perception and conception . . . And this unavoidable mixture is what we ordinarily think of as reality. Indeed it is, and ever will be, all of reality that it is possible for the human mind to know. Therefore to say that Īśvara is unreal because He is anthropomorphic is sheer nonsense.'[3]

This understanding of the distinct functions of myth and philosophy made it possible for Vivekananda to have a thoroughly intelligible and practicable view of universal religion, an ideal to which his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, was deeply devoted. In his 1896 New York address on 'The Ideal of a Universal Religion' he distinguished between the philosophical, mythical, and ritualistic aspects of religions. Universality was impossible to attain in any of the three. Indeed, such universality would be destructive, since the universe is based on 'unity in diversity'. On the positive side I understand his ideal to be a universal religion, the essence of which was an inclusiveness founded on two complementary principles: (*a*) the same truth can be expressed in different symbolisms; and (*b*) the same thing can be viewed in different perspectives, all of which are mutually coherent. Accordingly he did not for a moment countenance the ideal of a world-faith artificially formed by abstracting from all the philosophical, mythical, and ritualistic differences to reach a common core from which all living reality is necessarily lost.

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[2] Swami Nikhilananda, *Vivekananda: The Yogas and Other Works*, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, 1953, p. 408.

[3] *ibid.*, p. 411.

1963

The answer to the question, 'Can myth be translated into philosophical language?' is clearly in the negative. Our discussion, however, does not lead to an equally clear answer to the second question: 'Is a particular religion *wholly* mythical in character, or can we abstract from it certain doctrinal propositions which are either true or false?'

Perhaps the phrasing of this question makes a satisfactory answer impossible. Since pure myth is a form of art, it is possible that we may get some light from a consideration of the nature of artistic creativity. Immanuel Kant was much concerned with this problem. He saw that many artistic creations lack the 'spirit' which distinguishes great art. He concluded that the 'genius' necessary to produce the latter was essentially the power to create 'aesthetic ideas'. He defines these as representations of the imagination which give rise to much thought, but to which no definite thought is adequate. They are the counterpart of *rational* ideas, which are concepts to which no perception or image can be adequate.

This seems to be precisely what we find in the myths of religion. The ideas they present differ from the rational ideas of science in that they both challenge and empower the reader to experience them in his own existence. The thoughts which they evoke are all inadequate to their expression; yet they are life-giving thoughts revealing depths of existence otherwise hidden. If the charge is made that such an interpretation of myth and mythical religion makes impossible a straightforward account of truth, the answer is that the history of religious controversy even in the context of one faith demonstrates that the truth accessible in myth is precisely of this nature: it is a *lived* truth, to which no set of propositions is adequate and which can therefore be expressed in manifold ways.

This is not to deny the legitimacy of the concept 'philosophical faith', which I borrow from Karl Jaspers. There are great differences between the philosophies of the Upaniṣads, Spinoza, and Jaspers, but among the similarities is agreement on the existential import of the most serious philosophical inquiry. That is, the motivation of these thinkers in their rational pursuit of ontology — the investigation of being — is not to reach an understanding for its own sake, but in order to participate in being to the fullest possible measure. With the writers of the Upaniṣads we have the clearest intrinsic evidence of the presence of inspiration which flows from immediate experience. And what is distinctive of this inspired thought is not the description of spiritual experience in personalistic terms but the striving to express an experience which transcends the particularizing which is inherent in personalism. It may be called 'faith' because of its existential rather than theoretical nature, and 'philosophical' because of its endeavour toward rational expression rather than mythical portrayal.

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Finally I must consider the implications of my title: Are mythical religion and philosophical faith compatible, or does devotion to one exclude commitment to the other? Disregarding karma-yoga and raja-yoga, we find an austere distinction between the bhakta and the jñāni. The former finds his realization in the madness of love for the divine, and in this deep emotional devotion the personal imagery of myth is both natural and necessary. The jñāni, on the other hand, is called by Vivekananda a 'philosopher' or 'thinker' — but certainly one of a very peculiar kind.

> 'To say that God is the Father or Mother, the Creator of this universe, its Protector and Guide, is to him quite inadequate to express Him. To him, God is the Life of his life, the Soul of his soul. God is his own Self . . . All the mortal parts of him become pulverized by the weighty strokes of philosophy and are brushed away. What at last truly remains is God Himself.'[4]

This is Vivekananda's version of what I have called 'philosophical faith'. He distinguishes the four yogas and the types of men to whom they severally appeal, in harmony with the tradition of Vedanta. But it is apparent from history that they are not exclusive. Vivekananda himself was a master of all four yogas. And he was something in addition. As distinguished from the philosopher as jñāni he was also a great philosopher of religion. I mean by this that he could and did, on the basis of his experience in all the yogas, and from *within* them, appraise their relationships to each other and to the other living religions of the world. He was a living example of the possibility of being both devotee and philosopher.

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[4] *ibid.*, p. 398.

As such he is a beacon not for the West alone nor the East alone but for all men who face one or both of two anxious problems : (*a*) how to understand the tension between mythical belief and philosophical inquiry, and (*b*) how to understand the relationship between the concrete historical religion to which one is devoted and other faiths. The key to their solution is in a penetrating understanding of religion. I know of no more concise comprehensive and illuminating statement of the issue than the conclusion of Vivekananda's address cited above :

> 'By means of intellectual assent we may subscribe today to many foolish things, and change our minds altogether tomorrow. But true religion never changes. Religion is realization—not talk or doctrines or theories, however beautiful they may be. It is being and becoming—not hearing or acknowledging. It is the whole soul's becoming changed into what it believes. That is religion.'[5]

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[5] *ibid.*, p. 399.

VIVEKANANDA: THE CHALLENGE TO THE WEST

C. T. K. CHARI

[Dr C. T. K. Chari, M.A., Ph.D., Chairman, Department of Philosophy and Psychology, Madras Christian College, Tambaram, Madras, has contributed articles to the *Vedanta Kesari* off and on. Here in a short but forceful article he shows how Swami Vivekananda presents a challenge to the West by asserting the basic unity of all religious truth. —*Ed.*]

Swami Vivekananda presents the greatest challenge to the West by boldly asserting that the unity of religious truth is to be attained at the highest mystical altitudes. Half a century and more of popularization of his teaching has not taken away the edge of the challenge. Scholars in the West still shrink from so naked a recognition of mystical unity. Some even suspect that it is the *lèse-majesté* of Indian religion. R. C. Zaehner, in his *Hindu and Muslim Mysticism*, endorses the verdict that India is the Great School of Mysticism : 'Indian religion is unique in that it makes mystical experience the very basis of religion.' In spite of this concession, Zaehner argues that it is quite misleading to talk of the mystical unity of all religious traditions. He suspects, for instance, that Ṣūfīsm is, for the most part, so radical a distortion of Islam that it constitutes a separate religion, 'Vedanta in Muslim dress'. He finds that Hindu mysticism differs from both the Christian and Muslim varieties by accepting the eternity of the soul as a fact of experience.

Zaehner is not alone in voicing such perplexities. A. C. Bouquet, in his study of comparative religion, seems quite anxious to explain away the mystical elements in Christianity, Islam and Judaism. According to him, the Christian mysticism which stems from the pseudo-Dionysius is not Christian at all ; it is Neo-Platonism. Ṣūfīsm is a 'foreign element' which has worked its way into Islam. The Jewish Zohar and Kabbala traditions belong to sources outside Judaism : Gnosticism, Neo-Platonism and Alexandrianism. F. R. Tennant in his *Philosophical Theology*, brands an ineffable and indefinable mystical experience as a pseudo-cognition.

The critic of mysticism, after heaping his Pelion on Ossa, becomes uneasily aware that mysticism still eludes him. Tennant admits that there can be no refutation of mysticism which does not beg the very question at issue. If mystical insight, he says, is what its *defenders* claim to be (what else is there at stake ?), its whole *modus operandi* is inscrutable. Zaehner establishes not that *mysticism* varies but that its *interpretations* do, even in India. William James, with his eyes open to the wider vistas, affirmed brusquely the unanimity of mystical utterances. W. T. Stace and Arberry have recently reached not dissimilar conclusions.

Why is Vivekananda a challenge to all these scholars who have busied themselves with mysticism ? Nobody denounced mysticism in harsher language than he ; yet nobody exalted it more. He noticed the slipperiness and ambiguity of the term 'mysticism'. Does it mean 'nature mysticism', or 'cosmic consciousness', or, the 'occult' traditions of Eliphas Levi ? The Swami said : 'We have become weak, and that is why occultism and mysticism come to us — these creepy things ; there may be great truths in them ; but they have nearly destroyed us.' (*Complete Works*, III, 7th impression, p. 224). In a letter (*Complete Works*, VIII, 2nd edition, p. 335) he went so far as to say that 'mystics as a class are not very favourable to me' while admitting again that there may be some truth in the 'mass of mysticism' which has burst on the West as a counter-blast to its scientism.

What does the indictment mean ? In *The Vedanta Kesari* for May 1955, I have discussed some quasi-mystical states which are being increasingly studied by psychologists, psychiatrists, psychoanalysts and neurologists : states induced by mescal and LSD-25, auto-hypnotic and allied states, 'depersonalizations' of 'trance-mediums', etc. Vivekananda maintained that these are cheap substitutes for genuine mysticism. He shrewdly anticipated the modern clinical discovery that there is a 'common core' in all these experiences. The individual becomes dimly conscious of an immensity enveloping him. It is the first plunge into 'Spencer's Unknowable', as Vivekananda described it with his inimitable touch of humour. One must, however, dive deeper to bring about profounder changes of personality.

The lower neurotic or psychotic involvement in mysticism may have its occasional therapeutic value. One of Flournoy's psychopathic subjects achieved a quasi-mysticism which comforted and strengthened her. There was an absolute certainty (*certitude absolue de la réalité du Divin*); ineffability or incommunicability (*Les mots ne sont pas faits pour décrire ce que j'ai éprouvé, ou subi, ou expériencé*); imperative character (*consciente d'une autre réalité essentielle et immuable*); and heightened personality (*c'était à la fois une immensité et une intimité*). Flournoy showed that the subject's 'interior vision' (*une voix tout intérieure*) was composite and built up from the idealized image of the parent, the suggestions of strength she received from the therapist, the shining examples of virtue absorbed by reading religious literature ; and faith in Jesus. The 'presence' could not be summoned at will and when it came, it was located generally on the *left* and accompanied by a sense of well-being. Present-day psychosomatic medicine points to the preponderance, in certain cases, of psychoneurotic pains on the *left* side associated with a primitive unconscious symbolism of magic and feeling.

Swami Vivekananda saw how quasi-mystical states lend themselves to inflated interpretations. 'Self-styled mystics', he said, notice 'some little activity of their own and others' minds, and without knowing anything about the real character of such superficial manifestations, have published them as facts universal in their application.' (*Complete Works*, VI, 6th edition, p. 31). Silberer, in his *Problems of Mysticism and Its Symbolism*, pointed out how easy it is to confuse the mystic with the schizophrenic on the one hand and the self-seeking magician on the other. There are invisible lines of demarcation which are missed by a superficial psychology. The mystic cooperates with the infinite; the magician rebels against it and tries to bend it to his selfish aims; the schizophrenic crumbles under the weight of an intolerable experience. 'God is dead,' Nietzsche exclaimed collapsing under the weight of the eternal. Fire is often the mystical symbol of a consuming experience. Etchegoyen, in his *L'amour Divin*, dwelt on the extreme subtlety of the symbolism : '*Il en exprime les nuances les plus délicates et les effets les plus violents.*' ('It expresses the most delicate nuances and the most violent effects.')

We must go from the lower ranges of mystical experience to the higher by disciplines and processes which are hinted at in the obscure images of pilgrimage, romance and transmutation. Etchegoyen noticed the profundity of the symbol of the sea to which I have drawn attention in a previous issue of *The Vedanta Kesari*. '*Francisco de Ossuna . . . développe avec subtilité le symbole de la mer : "La mer de notre âme n'a qu'un port; le salut".*' "*Francisco de Ossuna* . . . developed with subtlety the symbol of the sea : 'The sea of our soul has but one haven, salvation.'" In Attar's *Parliament of Birds*, the journey is an interior journey and it reaches its goal when the thirty birds (*Simurgh*) gaze at the Great *Simurgh* and find Him within. Vivekananda pointed out that religion suffers by being taught as a matter of pious opinion instead of as a plunge into deeper and deeper experiences. "There is always, however, a small group of men who teach religion from experience. They are called mystics and these mystics in every religion speak the same tongue and teach the same truth." (*Complete Works*, VI, 6th ed., p. 81).

Swami Vivekananda's great mission to the West was a confrontation and a challenge. In an age of intrepid scientific discovery and material expansion, he testified to the immensities within man. He spoke not as a scribe or amanuensis of his great Master but with a throbbing personal experience of the mystical deeps. His unquenchable spirit today nourishes the Ramakrishna movement all the world over. His challenge cannot be stifled or tamed.

In seeking to penetrate Swamiji's indifference to circumstance, one has to remember that it is based on a constant effort to find the ideal thinking-place. Each family, each hearthstone was appreciated by him, in the degree in which it provided that mental and emotional poise which makes the highest intellectual life possible. One of a party who visited Mont Saint Michael with him on Michaelmas Day 1900, and happened to stand next to him, looking at the dungeon-cages of mediaeval prisoners, was startled to hear him say, under his breath, 'What a wonderful place for meditation!' There are still some amongst those who entertained him in Chicago in 1893, who tell of the difficulty with which, on his first arrival in the West, he broke through the habit of falling constantly into absorption. He would enter a tram, and have to pay the fare for the whole length of the line, more than once in a single journey, perhaps, being too deeply engrossed in thought to know when he had reached his destination. As years went on, and these friends met him from time to time, they saw the gradual change to an attitude of apparent readiness and actuality. But such alteration were little more than surface-deep. Beneath, the will glowed with all its old fervour, the mind held itself ever on the brink of the universal.

—SISTER NIVEDITA.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE SCIENTIFIC IDEAL

J. M. G. FELL

[Dr J. M. G. Fell, Ph.D., who is Associate Professor in the Department of Mathematics, University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.A. is closely connected with the Ramakrishna Vedanta Center in Seattle. In his present interesting article he traces the conflict of science and religion in the mediaeval period and points out how timely and effective was Swamiji's appearance on the world-scene to defend the cause of religion, grounded on a scientific basis. — *Ed.*]

We of the Western world are immensely proud of our scientific achievements, and of the scientific spirit which made them possible. What intelligent youngster nowadays does not thrill to the vistas which science opens before us — space travel, instant communication, the conquest of disease and hunger, and all the other marvels of our technological age? Yet occasionally there appears among us a giant of the spirit, like Swami Vivekananda. In his presence we pause for a moment, our thoughts sobered; and we ask ourselves what all this means in terms of human character and human happiness. Swami Vivekananda himself was above all a builder of character, a moulder of strong, unselfish men and women. How did he himself look upon the scientific spirit and its meaning for human life? This is the question which we shall try to answer in this article.

It is of course almost impossible to do full justice to the thoughts of a mind as subtle and as universal as Swami Vivekananda's — a mind that was quite unafraid of contradictions, that could face all the opposing aspects of a problem, make them his own, and reconcile them. However, we do hope to grasp at least one vital strand of the Swami's thoughts on science and religion. We believe that he had a message of the utmost importance for scientific thinkers of today. In brief it is this: Understand the scientific ideal rightly, and you will find that it points the way directly to one of the genuine gateways into the spiritual ideal of religion. In this article we shall develop this theme in detail.

Swami Vivekananda came to the West at the time when, at least among the educated classes in the West, the scientific spirit had just completed its victory over the traditions of religious orthodoxy. Let us briefly review the nature of the scientific revolution in Western culture.

The mediaeval Church had enshrined the Christian spiritual tradition in an immense edifice of thought, the backbone of which was the philosophy of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas. In this edifice, the salvation of man, centering around the Incarnation of God as Jesus Christ, was the purpose and final cause of all natural phenomena. Creatures and things came into existence, and events were set in motion, not by mere natural law indifferent to spiritual goals, but also by the direct intervention of a personal God (and also of a personal Satan). In this intimate universe, tailored to the destiny of man on this one all-important planet, created a mere six thousand years ago and soon to be annihilated, the intervention of the supernatural was everywhere apparent. Undoubtedly the very concrete mediaeval conception of God's relation to His universe was helpful to many pious and simple-hearted devotees. But, as Swami Vivekananda often pointed out, the sense of dependence on external supernatural beings in the long run gives rise to horrible weaknesses.

> 'The idea of supernatural beings may rouse to a certain extent the power of action in man, but it also brings spiritual decay. It brings dependence; it brings fear; it brings superstition. It degenerates into a horrible belief in the natural weakness of man.' (Preface to *Raja-Yoga*, Works, Vol. I, p. 122).

In mediaeval Europe these characteristic evils of dualistic religion were rampant. The grossest fanaticism was indulged in the name of religion. Fear of divine displeasure became translated into violence and cruelty directed against the supposed 'enemies' of God — witches, heretics, Jews, and those courageous souls who struck out along paths of thought not sanctioned by the Church. The worldly entanglements of the organized Churches, their need to maintain their authority and cohesion amid the seething social conditions of the day, also forced upon them the role of inquisitor and persecutor, enforcing a uniformity of belief and practice. Again, a natural corollary of the superstitious dualism of the times was a belief in the inherent weakness of man. "What is man but a worm, a weak, helpless thing?" — so ran the well-known hymn. Ignorant of natural law, tortured by the fear of divine punishment for sin now and in the hereafter, man had no recourse but the Church, the divinely appointed guardian of faith and morals. This was the general attitude of the Christianity of those times — a belief in the inherent weakness and dependence of man.

We all know how stoutly Swami Vivekananda fought against these ideas of weakness and dependence. Here are two examples of his eloquent expressions on the subject :

> 'I am to worship therefore none but my own Self . . . To whom shall I go for help? Who can help me, the Infinite Being of the universe? These are foolish dreams, hallucination. Who ever helped anyone? None. Whenever you see a weak man, a dualist, weeping and wailing for help from somewhere above the skies, it is because he does not know that the skies are also in him. He wants help from the skies, and the help comes. We see that it comes; but it comes from within himself, and he mistakes it as coming from without.' ('The Atman,' Works, Vol. II, p. 250).

> 'Freedom is the first condition of growth. What you do not make free will never grow. The idea that you can make others grow, and help their growth, that you can direct and guide them, always retaining for yourself the freedom of the teacher, is nonsense, a dangerous lie, which has retarded the growth of millions and millions of human beings in this world. Let men have the light of liberty. That is the only condition of growth.' ('Maya and the Evolution of the Concept of God', Works, Vol. II, p. 115).

That deviations from the orthodox path in matters of spiritual practice and belief were not tolerated under such conditions is understandable. What is rather more strange is the inflexibility with which mediaeval Christendom insisted on certain primitive doctrines (supposedly maintained in the Bible) about the nature of the physical world. Here it made a tragic blunder. In failing to distinguish between the spiritual core and the inessential outer garments of the Christian tradition, and in insisting on blind obedience to the literal text of Scripture in matters belonging to the domain of science, the Church alienated from its fold ever increasing numbers of thoughtful people. If its teachings were wrong in the physical domain where they could be tested, might not the whole structure of theology be a baseless superstition? Thus in the last two or three hundred years it has become increasingly hard for educated people to find and grasp that spiritual sustenance which the organized Christian churches, in spite of their weaknesses, undoubtedly still have to offer.

Two of the most glaring and fiercely debated conflicts between science and theology have been over the Copernican astronomy and over the theory of evolution. The mediaeval theologians of the Church had worked out an elaborate picture of the cosmos, immortalized in Dante's great poem "The Divine Comedy". The earth was placed immovably at the center of the universe, with the heavenly bodies rotating around it in cycles upon cycles. Indeed, do not our own eyes see their motion? And does not Scripture assert the same, when it relates how Joshua commanded the sun — not the earth — to stand still (*The Book of Joshua*, Chap. 10, v. 13)? When Galileo, following Copernicus, proclaimed that the earth is not only not immovable, but has a double motion, about its own axis and about the sun, the reaction was immediate. He was denounced as a dangerous innovator, whose doctrines would upset the Church's settled view of the world — which after all was quite sufficient for salvation! — and thereby promote confusion and even atheism. He was compelled under threat of torture to recant his own scientific conclusions; and the authority of the Church was successful for many years in preventing his ideas from gaining currency in the universities of Europe. The Church's triumph over Copernicus and Galileo in their lifetime was, it might have seemed then, complete. But the greater its triumph then, the greater and more humiliating was its subsequent retreat, as over the centuries proof upon proof was found for the correctness of the Copernican view.

The battle over the theory of evolution and the origin of man came considerably later, but was an even severer blow to orthodox theology. According to the account in Genesis, God created the universe out of nothing in six days, along with man and all species of living things as they now exist. The date generally accepted on the basis of Biblical chronology for this momentous occurrence was 4004 B.C. The first man and woman were created sinless and deathless. They lived happily in the garden of Eden, experiencing nature only as a benign supplier of their needs. Sin, death, and the destructive aspects of nature — earthquakes, floods, the preying of one beast upon another — these made their appearance only after the Fall, the primaeval disobedience of Adam and Eve, when they ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. In the nineteenth century, however, the discoveries of astronomy, geology, and evolutionary biology had made a literal acceptance of this myth impossible to any thinking person. This planet has been in existence not for six thousand years but for hundreds of millions of years. Likewise, animals have preyed upon one another, and perished in earthquakes and floods, for many millions of years. Man himself lived on earth long before the date allotted to his creation, having ascended through hundreds of thousands of years out of a fluid series of lower forms. Confronted with this vast evolutionary panorama, devoid of any primaeval Eden or of any Fall, it is no wonder that many theologians protested that, with the Fall of man, the Redemption too had lost its meaning. It is well-known how bitterly theology fought against the evolutionary view. But visible evidence could not long be denied. And orthodox theology was again forced to retreat, leaving the field to science.

By the end of the nineteenth century the battle of science against religious conservatism had been won on a host of fronts. Ecclesiastical authoritarianism had been discredited in most educated minds. Man had recovered faith in himself. To gain new knowledge and insight he did not need to depend on the old books, the old authorities. Within himself was the capacity to pry into Nature's secrets and to improve his life. Henceforth religion itself would seek to be certified by science rather than *vice versa*. But inevitably, along with the old superstitions, much of real value had also been discredited. Under the blows of scientific criticism Western man had lost much of his sense of spiritual reality. Thus an acute problem arose. Was religion to be relegated entirely to the status of a quaint myth, or at best preserved as an ethical moderator in society? Or could man aspire to the knowledge of a spiritual reality based on foundations more solid and dynamic than the discarded dogmas? Could human experience and reason lead to spiritual knowledge? This was the urgent question facing Western man when Swami Vivekananda appeared on the scene.

Swami Vivekananda seized upon the scientific victory as an essentially healthy thing. It is a degradation of man's nature to believe in God because of compulsions from outside in the shape of authority, tradition, or habit. We ourselves are divine; and the only true knowledge of divinity is that which comes to us from our own experience and realization. The so-called knowledge of God that comes from outside is not knowledge at all; to be content with that is a sign of weakness and degeneracy. Indeed, the sincere atheist is better off than the man who calls himself religious and is content to rely on church dogmas for his knowledge of God. The man-centered attitude fostered by science might at times be misdirected, but it was not fundamentally wrong. Behind it lay the great truth : 'You yourself are the Being that you seek!' We find many passages in Swamiji's works inculcating faith in oneself, reliance on reason, and freedom from dependence on outside help and authority, whether natural or supernatural.

> 'The Vedanta teaches men to have faith in themselves first. As certain religions of the world say that a man who does not believe in a personal God outside of himself is an atheist, so the Vedanta says, a man who does not believe in himself is an atheist. Not believing in the glory of our own soul is what the Vedanta calls atheism. . . . All the powers in the universe are already ours. It is we who have put our hands before our eyes and cry that it is dark.' ('Practical Vedanta,' Part I, Works, Vol. II, pp. 292, 293).
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> 'Is religion to justify itself by the discoveries of reason, through which every other science justifies itself? . . . In my opinion this must be so. . . . If a religion is destroyed by such investigations, it was then all the time useless, unworthy superstition; and the sooner it goes the better. . . . All that is dross will be taken off, no doubt, but the essential parts of religion will emerge triumphant out of this investigation.' ('Reason and Religion,' Works, Vol. I, p. 366).
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> 'Why was reason given us if we have to believe? Is it not tremendously blasphemous to believe against reason? What right have we not to use the greatest gift that God has given us? I am sure God will pardon a man who will use his reason and cannot believe, rather than a man who believes blindly instead of using the faculties He has given him. . . . We must reason; and when reason proves to us the truth of these prophets and great men about whom the ancient books speak in every country, we shall believe in them. We shall believe in them when we see such prophets among ourselves. We shall then find that they were not peculiar men, but only illustrations of certain principles. They worked, and that principle expressed itself naturally, and we shall have to work to express that principle in us.' ('Religion : Its Methods and Purpose,' Works, Vol. VI, pp. 12, 13).

This then is the first great lesson inculcated by the scientific ideal — self-confidence, freedom, man's innate power and right to find truth and improve his lot by himself. There is a curious parallel between the impact of science and the old Hindu myth of Indra and Virochana. Indra, the king of the gods, and Virochana, the king of the demons, went to a great sage to learn the truth about the Atman, the Self. After long years of preparatory self-discipline they were told : 'You yourself are the Being that you seek. There is nothing higher than your own Self!' Virochana, equating the Self with the body, returned to his demon-followers and taught them that there was nothing higher than their physical bodies. Therefore, instead of bowing down to supposed higher beings, they should devote their whole energy to cultivating their physical well-being. Likewise, the first response of Western man to his newly-acquired power and self-confidence has been the response of Virochana. We have gone mad after creature comforts. We have thrown overboard the sense of dependence on higher beings, and through our technology we are worshipping the body as the Self.

But the response of Virochana — which we might describe as the response of the rajasic element in man to the teaching of the Self — was not totally wrong. When a nation or individual is dominated by tamas — inertia and fear — it needs to develop something of the self-confident Virochana-nature. Speaking especially of his own countrymen, Swami Vivekananda said :

> 'So my idea is first to make the people active by developing their rajas, and thus make them fit for the struggle for existence. With no strength in the body, no enthusiasm at heart, and no originality in the brain, what will they do — these lumps of dead matter! . . . Preach this message of fearlessness to all, from the Brahmin to the Chandala. Tell each and all that infinite power resides within them, that they are sharers of immortal Bliss. Thus rouse up the rajas within them — make them fit for the struggle for existence. First and then speak to them about salvation. First make the people of the country stand on their legs by rousing their inner power, first let them learn to have good food and clothes and plenty of enjoyment — then tell them how to be free

from the bondage of enjoyment.' ('Conversations and Dialogues,' Works, Vol. VII, pp. 179, 180).

But the reaction of Virochana is not the end of our fable. Indra, the king of the gods, thought at first like Virochana that by the Self was meant the body. But being of a more thoughtful and meditative disposition, he was not satisfied. This limited, corruptible body, he thought, cannot be the reality we are seeking. So he returned to his teacher for further instruction. What is that Self within us which we are seeking? So the teacher taught him a deeper truth: It is the Self, certainly, which we are to seek — not a being outside of us — but it is not the visible self, not the self as we ordinarily feel and know it. Through years of further hard self-discipline and introspection Indra was shown how to dive deeper than the physical self, how to pierce through the multiform layers of what *apparently* is, and reach down to that which *really* is. Thus he eventually realized the glory of his own true divine Self — beyond the body and beyond even the mind.

Indra of the fable represents the meditative spiritual type of man, who is not particularly concerned with physical power and comfort, who wants to find the reality behind the changing appearances. What is his response to the challenge of the scientific ideal? Will science undermine his spiritual urge? Or can it show him a valid path to the kind of truth which he is seeking? Is there a religion for him which will be in harmony with the scientific ideal? Swami Vivekananda believed that there was. It is a mistake to think that science caters only to the material ambitions of man. It was no trivial coincidence that the victory of science in the West was achieved just before Swamiji's appearance. The one helped to prepare the way for the other. We hold that *the methods and ideals of science, when rightly understood and generalized, point the way directly to the methods and ideals of raja-yoga.* True, the pursuit of science is by no means the same thing as the pursuit of religion. We have to go beyond the scientific method as it is practised today before we can arrive at true religion. But this should be no surprise even to the scientist. For the scientific ideal, consistently followed, itself points beyond the scientific practice of today. It even gives hints, as we shall soon see, concerning the method which is to be followed in order to uncover the true nature of the Self of man — hints which are heartily in accord with the method elaborated in the ancient yoga treatise of Patanjali.

The kinship of the scientific spirit with the philosophy and practice of raja-yoga has two aspects. First there is a kinship of methods. In the second section of this article we shall find striking parallels between the methods and techniques employed by science on the one hand and by raja-yoga on the other. Secondly, there is a similarity of the results obtained. There are remarkable general resemblances between the Sankhya philosophy on the one hand (which embodies the results of the practice of yoga) and some of the results of science on the other. These we shall mention briefly in the third and last section of this article.

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'Science and religion,' said Swamiji once, 'are both attempts to help us out of bondage,' (*Inspired Talks*, Works, Vol. VII, p. 101). How does science do this? It is a matter of our common experience that each of us carries within himself a massive array of preconceptions and ill-founded ideas to which he clings, and which are constantly hindering his efforts to gain understanding and new knowledge. In fact, any deep new insight into any field of study requires not merely that we enlarge our existing stock of information, but that we *unlearn* a great deal of what (perhaps unconsciously) we thought we knew before. Thus, to grasp Einstein's theory of relativity we must actively give up our customary unanalyzed notions of space and time. To master the quantum theory we have to give up the deep-rooted idea that an object can be observed without the observation affecting the object. When a new idea of genius arises in any field, it is apt to seem at first absurd and impossible because it contradicts some habit of thought which is so familiar and deeply ingrained in us that we cannot imagine any alternative to it. But familiarity is one thing, and logical necessity is another. The deep discoveries in science take place when someone questions a habit of thought which had not been questioned before; when he finds out that, though seemingly inescapably dictated by experience, the particular thought-pattern is not actually inescapable, but merely one of several logically permissible alternatives.

In mathematics there is a method of analysis expressly designed to help liberate the mind from what is merely familiar, but not logically necessary. This is the so-called axiomatic method. The finest illustration of the intellectual importance of this method is the discovery of non-Euclidian geometry. In Euclid's Elements, the compendium of ancient Greek mathematics, the whole body of geometrical propositions is reduced to a few basic propositions, called axioms, from which all the rest are deduced by pure logic. These axioms seem to have been regarded up to about a hundred and thirty years ago as indubitable, certified by intuition but not provable on the basis of anything yet more fundamental. Then came the discovery (about 1830, almost simultaneously by Gauss, Lobachevsky, and Bolyai) that in fact these axioms were arbitrary. They were neither unique nor inescapable. On replacing them by different axioms one obtained new systems of geometry, just as logical, self-consistent, and complete as Euclid's system, but far less familiar! It is an amazing fact that, in the light of Einstein's general theory of relativity, the new non-Euclidean geometries appear to describe 'real' physical space more accurately over vast distances than the familiar geometry of Euclid. Such is the practical impact of the thoughts of 'impractical dreamers'!

The exact sciences, too, are compelled to try to liberate themselves from 'the bondage of the familiar'. Ideas and concepts such as time, space, energy, particle, and so forth, tend to be applied indiscriminately in situations far removed from the area in which these concepts can be measured and their applicability directly verified. To counteract this tendency to unjustified extrapolation, the philosophy known as 'operationalism' has been developed. This asserts that the meaning of any concept lies solely in the operations by which that concept is linked with actual observation and experiment. Thus, according to this view, the concept of time (for example) has content only insofar as it refers to actual readings of clocks or other physical devices by which what we normally call 'time' is measured. This attitude would be hard, if not impossible, to adopt consistently throughout all scientific work; indeed, it would not even be desirable to try to do so, since too much emphasis on criticism stifles the creative impulse. The 'operational' attitude has value merely as a safeguard. It keeps us close to 'the solid ground of nature', by warning us that concepts, however natural and familiar cannot necessarily be extrapolated outside the realm of experience in which they have actually been verified.

This then is one of the guiding principles of science: Things need not be what they seem. Do not take ideas for granted merely because they are familiar, or because they appear to be inescapably dictated by your limited range of experience. Find out by careful analysis which of the ideas you hold are arbitrary; and be prepared to discard them if new insights demand it. We may express this principle in a slightly different way. No scientific concept is absolute. Each has validity only under certain preconditions. Alter the preconditions, and the concept may well lose its validity, and need to be profoundly modified. It is the task of science constantly to ferret out the preconditions of its concepts and laws. In doing so, in delimiting the sphere of validity of each one, it finds that each law is a special case, valid under particular conditions, of a more general law; and the latter in turn is found to be a special case of a yet more general law. Thus science progresses, discovering and formulating laws and concepts of ever increasing generality and pervasiveness. Each step is in some sense an approximation to the succeeding one. At each step some limitation or arbitrary assumption, inherent but unrecognized in the preceding stage, must be discarded before we can pass on to the succeeding stage. We are reminded of Swamiji's words, spoken in a somewhat different connection :

> '"This world has no existence." What is meant by that? It means that it has no absolute existence. It exists only in relation to my mind, to your mind, and to the mind of everyone else. We see this world with the five senses, but if we had another sense we would see in it something more. If we had yet another sense it would appear as something still different. It has therefore no real existence; it has no unchangeable, immovable, infinite existence. Nor can it be called non-existence, seeing that it exists and we have to work in and through it. It is a mixture of existence and non-existence.' ('Maya and Illusion', Works, Vol. II, p. 91).

As Swami Vivekananda indicates in the passage just quoted, this process of casting off limitations, of recognizing the arbitrariness of more and more of our cherished familiar preconceptions, has its analogue in the spiritual life. 'Discriminate!' says the Vedantic philosopher, 'Discriminate between what is universal and absolute, and what is particular and relative!' The discipline of monism is primarily a negative one. It does not place before us any dogma about ultimate truth or where it is to be found. It tells us, if we want to find something real, eternal, and absolute, to begin by discerning with ruthless clarity which aspects of life are *not* real, eternal, or absolute. Which things have value in and for themselves, and which have value only insofar as certain other preconditions obtain? And we are not merely to discern this distinction intellectually, but to live our lives in its light, giving up attachment to what is transitory and relative.

It will of course be objected that this similarity between the disciplines of science and of monistic religion is a mere analogy, a parallelism of words but not of content. It will be said that science is concerned with factual truths, and religion with values. To this we make two answers: Philosophically, facts and values cannot be ultimately separated. What we see in the world is to a great extent arbitrary, determined by what we *want* to see; and conversely, if we are to adopt rational values in life, they cannot be arbitrary, but must accord with the facts of our own constitution. Psychologically, the human mind is one, and cannot be made to divide its aspirations into water-tight compartments, seeking only facts in one compartment and only values in another. Therefore, dissimilar as science and religion admittedly now appear, we shall persist — as Swami Vivekananda did — in viewing them as particular aspects, temporarily separated, of one general aspiration of the human spirit after that which is at the same time absolutely real and absolutely good.

Through the practice of religion, the prophets of religion tell us, we can reach the Absolute. Can science also reach anything absolute? Not, we suspect, in its present form. For it labours under a contradiction inherent in its present mode of procedure. In spite of its determination to rid itself of all arbitrary preconceptions, there is one preconception of which it cannot rid itself — namely, the real existence of the external physical world. This or that aspect of sense-experience may be questioned by science; but sense-experience in toto cannot be questioned. We may argue the nature of space and time, and of the electrons and protons composing this chair. But the fact of the chair as a real observable entity in space and time can hardly be argued by science. Science as it stands now cannot raise the question whether this waking state is like the dream state — something which is arbitrary in toto, and from which we may expect somehow to 'wake up'. Why can it not do so? Because science needs a foundation, a universal criterion of truth and validity to which to appeal. It finds this in the common sense-perception of mankind, refined by instruments of exact measurement. Metaphysics is notoriously subjective; but all, whether idealist or materialist, communist or capitalist, will agree of the pointer-reading of an electronic measuring apparatus. To question this foundation of common sense-experience fruitfully would require that the questioner place himself upon a deeper foundation, independent of sense-experience ; and such a deeper foundation science does not possess. We are again reminded of Swami Vivekananda's words, spoken in a similar context :

> 'No amount of knowledge of the external world would solve the problem. "But," says the scientist, "we are just beginning to know a little. Wait a few thousand years and we shall get the solution." "No," says the Vedantist, for he has proved beyond all doubt that the mind is limited, that it cannot go beyond certain limits — beyond time, space, and causation. . . . Every attempt to solve the laws of causation, time, and space would be futile, because the very attempt would have to be made by taking for granted the existence of these three.' ('Maya and Illusion,' Works, Vol. II, p. 91).

This then is the fundamental limitation of present-day science. It cannot seriously question the reality and objectivity of the sense-perceived world. But, after all, this objectivity may well be an arbitrary assumption on our part. Who can tell whether this whole fabric of so-called waking life is in fact a dream from some deeper point of view? As the Greek poet says :

> 'Who knows if living after all is death,
> While death is counted life by those below ?'

But this is just where Vedanta begins. It proposes to question the sense-perceived world in toto, and to ask whether or not it is arbitrary, projected by the perceiver, like a dream. Further, like the sciences, it questions not merely speculatively but operationally. Just as physics analyzes a concept such as energy by analyzing the means whereby we measure it, so Vedanta proposes to question the status of the external world by analyzing the instrument by which we perceive it — namely, the mind. It sets out to subject the entire range of our mental processes, including our reason, to a deep scrutiny. Thus Vedanta begins with psychology. But this is not behaviouristic psychology, which approaches the mind through the body and the external world — the very concepts we desire to question. The tool for study here is introspection, which turns the searchlight of the mind itself upon itself. Of course introspection is a very difficult art. `The entire system of raja-yoga, the science of meditation and concentration, has been developed in order to enable man to quiet the waves of his mind until introspection becomes possible as a tool for the discovery of truth.

Before we mention the techniques of raja-yoga, however, it will be well to face one very serious and crucial question — the question which underlies every discussion on whether religion can ever be 'scientific'. It is this: Science, as we have seen, adopts common sense-experience as its ultimate criterion of fact. We saw that, in order to question this criterion, it would be necessary to place oneself upon a deeper foundation, to put in its place another, deeper criterion of fact and reality. What is this deeper criterion to be? Introspection, as every beginner in the practice of it knows, is notoriously uncertain. We create what we dream, and likewise we create what we introspect. Further, my introspection is mine alone. What it reveals to me is my own world. How can any factual truth, universally valid, be ascertained by such an intensely private and individual method? How can introspection provide us with a non-personal criterion of fact ?

We say that the existence of such a sure foundation for 'objective introspection' cannot be either proved or disproved to one who is not himself already adept in the practice of meditation and concentration. It cannot be established *a priori*. One has to try introspection seriously, and then see if it leads to universally valid truths. One can however speculate what kind of mental state would be needed as a foundation for reliable, non-private introspection — leaving aside for the moment the question whether such a state is possible. To begin with, the difficulty with introspection, as we have hinted, is that the mind creates what it introspects, even as it creates what it dreams. Under what impulsion does it thus subtly create? Under the impulsion of uncontrolled and usually unrecognized desires and fears. So, to be an objective witness of 'mental reality', we must stand on a vantage point outside of all desires and fears, yet retaining an intense awareness. Is this possible? At first sight it is not at all clear that it is possible. The answer depends on the nature of man. If we are at bottom a perishable body and no more, then presumably fears and desires are of our essence, and we cannot eliminate them without eliminating awareness itself. Now it is the cardinal teaching of Vedanta that there is a hidden eternal foundation within each man — which is his true Self and is of the very nature of awareness — which has nothing to do with the changes, desires, and fears inherent in the body and mind. On that Self he can stand; therein lies his complete fulfilment; having known it, he cannot be drawn back again into the realm of desires and fears. Only by viewing reality from the vantage point of that Self, says Vedanta, can one perceive 'mental reality' as it truly is. Again, there is the other question: Will two men, each established in the Self, perceive the *same* 'mental reality'? Or will each still be seeing only his own private world? Vedanta maintains that, just as physically we are all part of the same physical world, which is perceived in common by all, so are we all, as minds, part of the same mental world, which can be perceived in common by all of us independently of the bodily senses. Thus, to the adept, introspection reveals a world which is not private to himself but is common to all minds. Indeed, at its highest reach, Vedanta declares that at the level of the Self there is no difference between man and man; that all differences reside in the body and mind, and when we pass beyond these we are completely one.

Thus Vedanta asserts that there is within man's consciousness a foundation for the awareness of reality, on the basis of which we can without prejudice examine our customary ideas of the reality of the external world, and see whether they are arbitrary or not. But, to become established in it, we have to go through an arduous course of training; and until that training is far advanced we can have no guarantee (apart from the assurances of sages and prophets) that we are not following a will-o'-the-wisp. The sceptic, of course, will suggest that whatever training we undertake will be merely a new conditioning of the mind, and therefore of little value as a means to factual truth. Thus, the validity of raja-yoga as a training for the perception of truth can only be a working hypothesis at the beginning, which one man may accept and which another with equal right may reject. Nevertheless, one may hope that, among those few individuals who have succeeded in fully quieting their minds, there will be agreement regarding the rarefied truths which they perceive in meditation. Even the fact of this agreement, however, could not be fully proved to the uninitiated.

On this question of reliability and mutual agreement Swami Vivekananda once spoke thus:

> 'Deep, deep within is the soul, the essential man, the Atman. Turn the mind inward and become united to that; and from that standpoint of stability, the gyrations of the mind can be watched and facts observed, which are to be found in all persons. Such facts, such data, are to be found by those who go deep enough, and only by such. . . .
>
> 'If you intend to study the mind you must have systematic training. You must practise to bring the mind under your control, to attain to that consciousness from which you will be able to study the mind and remain unmoved by any of its wild gyrations. Otherwise the facts observed will not be reliable; they will not apply to all people, and therefore will not be truly facts or data at all. . . . Among that class who have gone deeply into the study of the mind, the facts observed have been the same no matter in what part of the world such persons may be or what religious belief they may have.' ('The Importance of Psychology,' Works, Vol. VI, pp. 31, 32).

(To be continued)

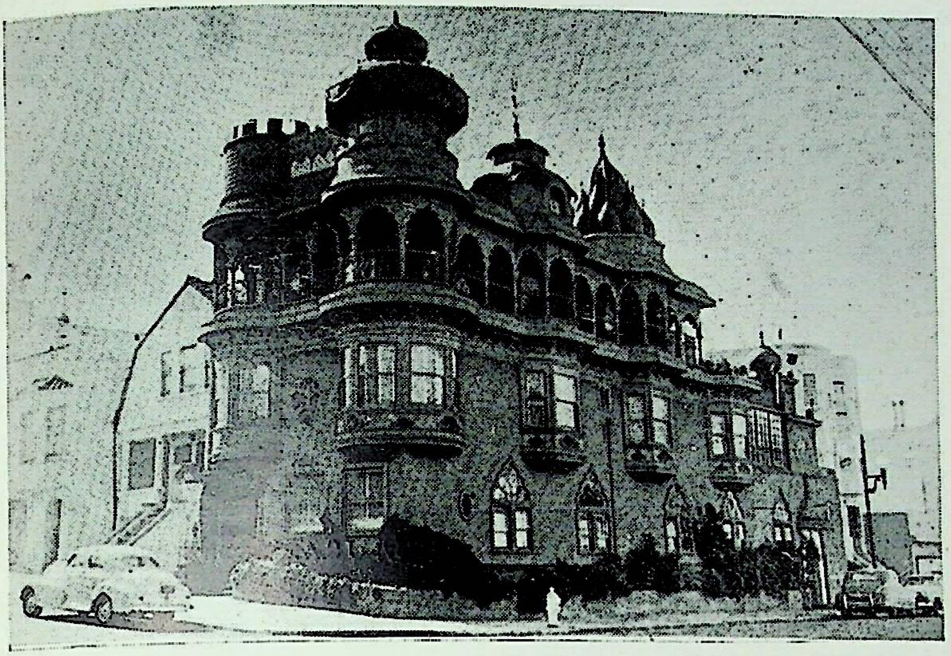
HE IS STILL A BEACON LIGHT

SWAMI SHRADDHANANDA

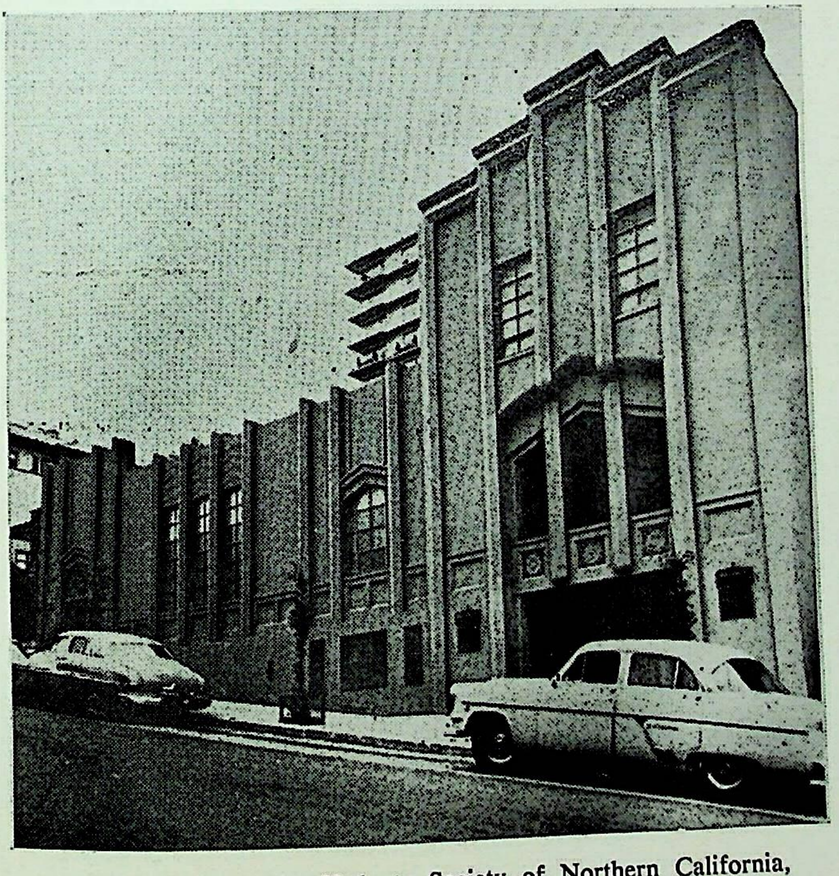
[Swami Shraddhananda, a former Editor of the *Udbodhan*, the Bengali journal of the Order, is now an assistant minister of the Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco. In this short paper he impresses on our minds the unity underlying some of the apparent contradictions in Swamiji's utterances. —*Ed.*]

Swami Vivekananda should not be looked upon as a powerful figure belonging to the past history of our country. He is surely a living influence in the history that is being made at present. There was a time when the fiery words of this great Sannyasin kindled and sustained in many young men of India the spirit of self-sacrifice for the motherland. Not a few of our leaders who guided the struggle for India's independence were inspired by his life and example. But even today when India is free the need for Swamiji's message is not gone, for stimulation to political freedom is only a part of that message. Even responsible leaders are realizing now that the attainment of independence has been but one step toward total national well-being. Many more steps remain yet to be covered. Numerous thinkers with different standpoints have been putting forward various views with regard to these steps. Many researches are also being conducted. Those in authority very often hold aloft many hopes and go on appealing to people for help and co-operation. Considerable anxiety and sense of frustration too are expressed from time to time. We believe that the ideas of Swami Vivekananda about national reconstruction can help a great deal toward removing much of our confusion in this regard. In his message can be found the clue to resolving the severe conflict in our mind between stereotyped patterns in our government and society on the one hand and drastically reactionary movements on the other. The modern Indian nation did not have one single 'father' as certain quarters like to proclaim. Modern India was built by the combined genius and efforts of a legion of heroic workers, thinkers and savants. Swami Vivekananda was undoubtedly one of these. Time has not yet come to put these 'fathers' of the nation in a showcase. We have to actively remember each one of them, seek light from their sayings for the solution of our problems. Particularly it is necessary to turn to Swami Vivekananda and try to guide our thoughts and activities according to his directions.

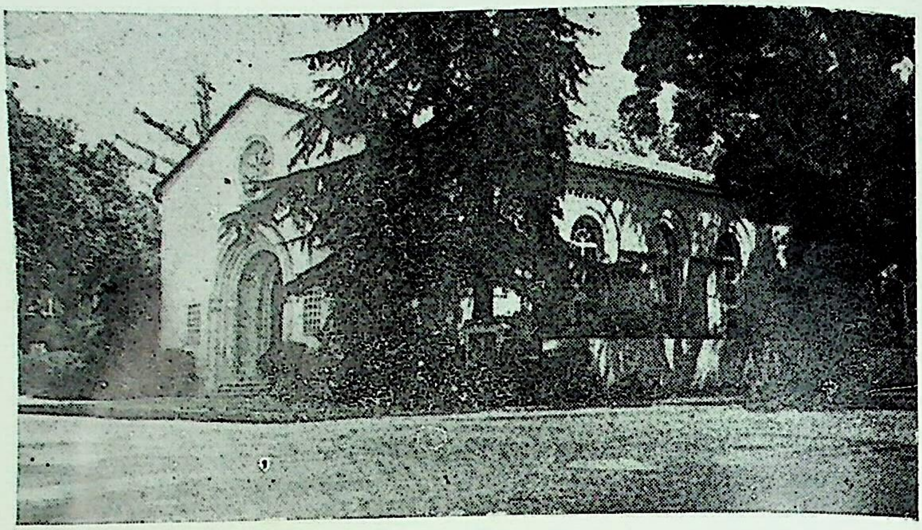
The Swami lived in this world for only thirty-nine years. The powerful personality that was manifested in this short span of life had many striking facets. Equally wonderful is the variety of themes about which he spoke and wrote. For many, therefore, it is as difficult to perceive a complete picture of his character as it is to find a consistent harmony among his different utterances. Sometimes he appears as a great Sannyasin with intense renunciation, adept in the yogas of jñāna, bhakti and dhyāna like his master, Sri Ramakrishna; at other times we find in him the clear image of a self-forgetful servant of his motherland deeply absorbed in the furtherance of the material well-being of the masses. Swamiji may be taken as a serene philosopher with vast wisdom, and it is equally possible to look on him as a sociologist or an educator with unprecedented foresight. To many he is a devoted and dynamic representative of orthodox Hinduism; to others, again, his presentation of Hinduism seems to have deviated considerably from the ancient way. Sister Nivedita and Miss Josephine MacLeod, two of his famous Western disciples, testify to the deep emotional fervour they used to witness in the face of their master when he would say the word 'India'. The same Vivekananda may as well have the claim of being a citizen of the world in the truest sense of the word. When he is seen to discuss China or analyze the mode of living, education and industry of the Japanese, when he is feeling



Old Temple of the Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco, the first ever Hindu Temple to be built in the West (1905).



New Temple of the Vedanta Society of Northern California, San Francisco. Dedicated in 1959.



Vedanta Center, Berkeley, U.S.A.

A bird's eye view picture of the Retreat of the Vedanta Society of Northern California, at Olema (an hour's drive from San Francisco).

the heartbeat of Europe with a mature historian's insight, when he is mixing in the American society as if he belonged to it, or losing himself in the antiquities of Egypt, Turkey and Greece — who would then say that Vivekananda was only an Indian and his heart was satisfied by counting the well-being of India alone ?

And yet through these different traits in Swamiji's personality there must be a thread of unity. Those traits are not mutually contradictory.

When we hear him say, 'For the next fifty years this alone shall be our keynote, — this, our great Mother India. Let all other vain gods disappear for that time from our minds. This is the only god that is awake, — our own race. Everywhere His hands, everywhere His feet, everywhere His ears. He covers everything. All other gods are sleeping . . . The first of all worship is the worship of the Virat, of those all around us' ('The Future of India', an address in Madras), the question arises in our mind, is he the same person who elsewhere spoke so passionately about Self-knowledge, austerities and renunciation? Sometimes Swamiji pays glowing tribute to the glories of ancient India. At other times his words are full of sharp criticism against many old customs and mores. Now he praises eloquently Western society, education and science. Again he speaks fearlessly about the worthlessness of the material civilization of the Occident. Yet we cannot believe that there is no intrinsic harmony among the apparently conflicting viewpoints.

The dream of a future India which Swami Vivekananda enunciated in his 'Hinduism and Sri Ramakrishna' is not based on any partial achievement. It is the picture of an all-round expansion of the whole Indian nation. Food, clothing, secure shelter, health, education, industrial progress — these surely are its primary factors, but social freedom, national unity and above all a resuscitation of religious values form vital elements in that national growth. According to Swamiji's imagination, future India is to be a unique model of nations. Each nation has to advance in its own way to its cherished ideal. The advancement of India too must have its own characteristic quality which should not copy that of America or China or Japan or Russia. Vivekananda over and over again warned his countrymen that attempts to cast one nation completely in the pattern of another are sure to jeopardize if not destroy its essential vitality. India must learn many things from the Western nations but must not on that account turn Western.

Swami Vivekananda was not only a saint, religious leader and philosopher of the highest order but he had to function also as a great patriot, educationist, social reformer and a humanist with unparalleled sympathy and understanding. It was natural, therefore, that he manifested different phases of personality in different contexts. But one should never suspect any division in the total makeup of his character. His was a wonderfully integrated character tuned to the infinite and turned earthward for the service of God in Man. Absolutely unselfish, dynamic in action and profound in his judgements, he was really a beacon light for humanity in general and for the Indian people in particular.

Since the problems of India were manifold in the different levels of her life, Swamiji had often to speak from diverse angles. Each of his utterances has to be judged with regard to its particular context. There is not really any contradiction between any two of his statements. To Swamiji's thinking, the material progress of India need not have to stand on the ruins of her spiritual culture. Let India move forward in science and technology, but let her not abandon her faith in God, her worship and prayers in temples, her spiritual contemplation and pursuit of the Eternal. Free from the selfishness and superstitions of the past, a new, virile society has to emerge in India, but there will be no place in it for perversities, injustice and unbridled sensuality. In Swamiji's speeches and writings we get a clue as to how the different problems of our country can have a well-balanced solution on these lines. The ideal Indian character of the future should also imply a harmony of several contraries — serene calmness and tremendous activity, natural strength and deep humility, profound spiritual wisdom and absorbing concern for the world, intense patriotism and genuine goodwill toward all nations, unshakable self-confidence and unreserved openness to learning from others. Such a character need not be considered an idle dream. In Swami Vivekananda we can see such a harmony realized.

He himself has said, 'How many Vivekanandas shall be born in time.' Is it not a significant hint for the future of India?

BHAGAWAN RAMAKRISHNA

DILIP KUMAR ROY

[Sri Dilip Kumar Roy is well-known both in India as well as the West as a poet and as an authority on Music. In this and the poem appearing on page 236, he pays his homage to the twin personalities, Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda on the occasion of the great Swami's Birth Centenary. — *Ed.*]

O pinnacle spirit of our age, O Mother Kali's deputy
And darling son — who haildest Her as thy All-in-all, we bow to thee !
Lord Ramakrishna, thou camst to lavish on all the largess of Her Light,
While we outlawed Her radiant Truth — blinded, alas, by maya's night !

Seeing us sinking in despond, yoked to the weakling's worldliness,
Flashing thy golden dawn thou calledst to deliver us from our dark distress.

Thou sangst : " If you cry like a child : ' Mother where art thou ? Come apace ! '
" She'll hold you in Her arms and kiss away your tears in tenderness.
" Hark, every heart that sings in love — but echoes Her Love's own minstrelsy !
" And sun and moon and stars ring with Her Soul's self-luminous melody."

Seeing us sinking in despond, yoked to the weakling's worldliness,
Flashing thy golden dawn thou calledst to deliver us from our dark distress.

" All who in simple faith appeal, asylum at Her feet shall find :
" Only the rebel who spurns Her lustre gropes in the labyrinth of his mind.
" Only Her celestial Glance redeems our way-lost destiny
" And all upon whom She has smiled are ransomed everlastingly."

Seeing us sinking in despond, yoked to the weakling's worldliness,
Flashing thy golden dawn thou calledst to deliver us from our dark distress.

" Power of science, glamour of wealth nor beauty of art can win to Her Grace :
" They are the siren gleams that veil Her last apocalyptic Face.
" We go on counting boughs and branches, leaves and tendrils pompously,
" Forgetting, fools, 'tis fruit that saves — not pride that flaunts our pedantry."

Seeing us sinking in despond, yoked to the weakling's worldliness,
Flashing thy golden dawn thou calledst to deliver us from our dark distress.

Thou never wouldst crave aught for thyself nor pause to take thought for the morrow,
But rainedst on all unstintingly thy nectarous words to heal their sorrow.
So, poets, kings and sages chant in rapture thy name, passing sweet
And Vivekananda, the great world-conqueror, laid his soul, Lord, at thy feet.

Seeing us sinking in despond, yoked to the weakling's worldliness,
Flashing thy golden dawn thou calledst to deliver us from our dark distress.

MANKIND NEEDS THE COMPREHENSIVE VIVEKANANDA

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

[Swami Budhananda, a former Editor of the *Vedanta Kesari*, is now assistant minister at the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center, New York. He stresses the necessity of comprehending Vivekananda not in a fragmentary but in a comprehensive way; and cautions us not to be carried away by some particular utterances of Vivekananda by neglecting all the other complementary writings and advices. — *Ed.*]

I

Swami Vivekananda's name conjures up in one's mind all that is shining and glorious, noble and ennobling, living and life-giving, all that is vigorous and invigorating, positive and purposive; all that is true and pure, undying and illuminating, in the national heritage of India. Vivekananda is the very personification of all that was good, great and glorious in the spiritual culture of mankind. What is more, he represents the future wave of the transcendental religion of man.

This being the year of his birth Centenary many waves of enthusiasm have already arisen for Vivekananda and his message, in India and other countries in the world. Many more will arise. There is a great need to keep this enthusiasm in perspective. Vivekananda belongs to all humanity and all posterity. The more the days will pass, thinking and ardent people everywhere in the world will realize that he symbolized in him and also gave to humanity something crucially important without which even its survival would be doubtful, not to speak of any higher evolution of human civilization.

Therefore anywhere in the world of today, for any right thinking person, who wants to feel in an oceanic manner for all humanity, sweeping through all barriers, and work for the upliftment of all in and through his own life, there can hardly be any other study more beneficial and rewarding than the Vivekananda-idealism.

The whole of human civilization is passing through a critical stage. Humanity is sick, sick of the ironical pairs of its opposites; power and imbecility; plenty and penury; knowledge and ignorance; speed and want of a goal. And yet, before all these problems even got shaped in the course of history, the solution of them was made known to man. That is Vivekananda and his message. In the saying it may appear to be an over-simplification of world problems. But when we see that all problems have some tap roots, we no longer doubt that there can be some 'tap' solutions too, if such a term is permissible. This is how it is possible to have the solution of many and various problems of humanity in one man's message, for he taught us how to work at the root from which every thing issues and weaves this perplexing texture of history.

Having had the plenary experience of the Ultimate Reality, Vivekananda taught that existence is one and therefore real man is one and never two or more, though apparent men are many. This is the basic truth. If, what we think and do, does not lead us to the realization of this truth, from such thoughts and actions problems are bound to arise and afflict humanity. Only such thoughts and actions as flow from experiential knowledge of this truth will not create problems for humanity. But at a given point of time we may not have even a handful of people with such knowledge.

What then could be done to serve humanity in this situation? The answer was in Vivekananda's action which was his teaching. He spent his precious life in awakening individual souls and creating in them an urge for self-realization. If the ocean of Vivekananda's teachings could be reduced to one drop, here is that drop. In this one drop there is the cure of all the virulent diseases the world is suffering from. 'Manifest the divinity within you and everything will be harmoniously arranged around it.' Manifest the Ātman. Do whatever is needed for that in a way which may be helpful to others also for doing the same. Then you have shot yourself across your personal problems, and also served humanity, in the most rewarding and creative way possible.

Study of Vivekananda can end here or begin from here. Then our enthusiasm for Vivekananda and his teachings will stay in perspective. It is necessary to see the ocean across the waves and also to know that all the waves are made of the same water particles.

Gautama, the Buddha, said of his own teachings: 'As the great ocean has only one taste, the taste of salt, so my doctrine has only one flavour, the flavour of emancipation.' Truly, this could be said of Vivekananda's teachings too. Those who will stick to this fundamental fact about his teachings will not easily lose their way in the vastness, variety and seeming contradictions in Vivekananda's teachings.

II

Vivekananda touched human life and its problems at many points and levels in a variety of ways. His teachings constitute a powerhouse of ideas from which numberless people simultaneously and endlessly can draw for their respective purposes, and cross-purposes too. This creates a problem.

It has also been revealed, specially in India, since the starting of the Vivekananda Centenary, that he has universal appeal among all sections of people. And various sections of people are enthusiastic about Vivekananda for different reasons and purposes, which they find fulfilled in him. This would not appear to be anything wrong; as the need, so the take.

But then the question is, are we taking the real Vivekananda and his inspiration even for our sectional purposes? A time has come in human history when we require the comprehensive Vivekananda and not the segmentary Vivekananda even for our sectional purposes. It is India's special national duty to demonstrate before the world an earnest attempt to understand and follow the comprehensive Vivekananda. Before the twentieth century saw the light of the day Vivekananda himself warned us, 'There cannot be any progress without the whole world's following in its wake; and it is becoming clearer everyday that the solution of any problem can never be attained on national, or racial or any narrow ground.' Even if we want to 'utilize' Vivekananda for our purposes, we should see to it that the whole Vivekananda comes in the wake of our invoking his teachings. Otherwise we would not be helping ourselves as much as we could have done through what we are drawing from Vivekananda. Maybe, in that case, we would not be drawing inspiration from the real Vivekananda as he is.

III

A critical and dispassionate analysis of some of our common ways of drawing from Vivekananda will show how often we are tending to shy away from the comprehensive Vivekananda and stay satisfied with certain catch ideas which answer our immediate and sectional purposes.

It is customary in India to dilate on Vivekananda as the patriot-saint of modern India. Undoubtedly Vivekananda was a patriot and also a saint. Therefore it would appear to be perfectly right to call him a patriot-saint. But in what sense was Vivekananda a patriot? Patriotism in today's world is a necessary evil. It usually goes with jingoism. There is not a crime in the world man has not committed in the name of patriotism. Yet in today's world without patriotism a nation cannot survive as an entity. Therefore patriotism bears a badge of honour in every country.

Vivekananda was not a patriot in any accepted sense of the word. His patriotism was an offshoot of his universalism born of his plenary experience of ultimate reality. Having known experientially the Atman-Brahman equation, Vivekananda became incapable of seeing things in an ordinary man's small way. He was no idolator of geography. Therefore he declared that for that one sentiment 'universalism' he was ready to sacrifice everything. After his great success in the Parliament of Religions, when earnest requests came from India for a quick return, he sharply wrote to his countrymen: 'I belong to the world as much as to India, no humbug about that. What country has exclusive claim on me? Am I a nation's slave?'

In his 'Song of the Sannyasin', were recorded some of the innermost vibrations of his heart. In that poem he sings:

> 'Have thou no home. What home can hold thee, friend?
> The sky thy roof, the grass thy bed, and food
> What chance may bring —
> . . . Like rolling river free,
> Thou ever be, sannyasin bold!'

This was the inner texture of Vivekananda's personality whom we call a patriot-saint.

Did he not then love India? Who says he did not? Who ever loved India like he did? But then we have to see the point that Vivekananda's love for India is of a piece with his love for humanity as a whole. It was in India that the problems of existence were delved in to their utmost depths and their solutions discovered. That all-important knowledge which is an essential part of India's spiritual heritage was going to be the one great saving factor for all humanity, not only for survival but also for further evolution of human civilization. If India's spiritual heritage were gone or lost the world would be a terrible place to live in. Therefore Vivekananda saw the supreme need of making India the idol of his love and worship. Vivekananda's patriotism is the cadence of his compelling compassion for mankind as a whole. And his concern for entire mankind came to him by commission from the Most High.

It is not suggested that Vivekananda's patriotism was a reasoned-out approach to India. It was as spontaneous as his breathing and his knowledge of Atman. But *we* require to understand it in the context of the totality of his personality and philosophy of life.

While on the idealistic side Vivekananda's patriotism is seldom discussed, on his realistic side too, his definition of patriotism is in effect ignored or rejected in India. Vivekananda said to the Indians:

> 'You must always remember that every nation must save itself; so must every man; do not look to others for help. You must not depend on any foreign help. Nations, like individuals, must help themselves. This is real patriotism. If a nation cannot do that, its time has not yet come. It must wait.' (V. 51)

Is this definition of 'real patriotism' much cared for in India today? It will be furiously asked: Did Vivekananda then want us to have nothing to do with other countries in this world of interdependence? Far from it. In modern times it was Swami Vivekananda who pioneered the fruitful East-West encounter and introduced an enduring dialogue on the high level of mutuality of respect and understanding. It was he who raising his voice above all types of national though natural chauvinisms, declared that East had need for the West as much as the West needed the East for building an enduring human civilization. If this was not understood and worked for, both East and West would fall in the chasm between them and disappear in ignominy. With the interest of both the West and India at heart Vivekananda therefore said:

> 'Do you know what my idea is? By preaching the profound secrets of Vedanta religion in the Western world, we shall attract the sympathy and regard of those mighty nations, maintaining for ourselves the position of their teacher in spiritual matters, let them remain our teachers in all material concerns . . . Nothing will come of crying day and night before them, "Give me this!" or "Give me that!" When there grows a link of sympathy and regard between both nations, by give-and-take intercourse, there will then be no need for these noisy cries. They will do everything of their own accord. I believe that by this cultivation of religion and wider diffusion of

> Vedanta, both this country and the West will gain enormously. To me the pursuit of politics is a secondary means in comparison with this. I will lay down my life to carry out this belief practically.' (VI. 48-49)

If the testament of Vivekananda's patriotism is adequately understood then there will arise in India a new enthusiasm for dynamic spirituality. If the Indians will have anything to teach, they must know and have the substance of religion in experience and also in its various theories. From the West for a long foreseeable time India will have to learn how to control outer nature. And in its turn the West will require to learn how to control inner nature. There is great pathos in the fact that man knows how to sail in outer space but does not know how to live with his own mind. India has that knowledge. But that knowledge has a chance of becoming obscure or even lost if we worship only at the shrines of national laboratories and power-projects and sing hymns of secularity. It is no use having spiritual knowledge only in books or being able only to quote scriptures. What is needed is to preserve the Indian way of life, so that in the normal course the nation will continue to be producing, as it has been in the past, some spiritually illumined souls to bear testimony to supersensuous truths, and also to teach them from experience. Otherwise the springs of India's spiritual resources will dry up and India will have nothing to teach. That will be a betrayal of providential trust and an act against humanity.

Therefore, preservation of the Indian way of life [1] is of supreme importance.

Today after the Chinese invasion Vivekananda's name is being widely invoked in India for strengthening the nation from within. If this had been done when India became free, no invasion of India would have taken place. Even today there is likelihood of using Vivekananda's message in a wrong way. No one should use his message as a temporary pep-talk.

India must be made strong in every conceivable way not because China has invaded her but because, as Vivekananda taught: 'Strength is life, weakness is death, strength is felicity, life eternal, immortal; weakness is constant strain and misery. Weakness is death . . .'; 'Infinite strength is religion and God'; 'The best guide in life is strength.' Vivekananda advocated the cultivation of strength always and everywhere in all possible ways, not for saving the skin, or the face-saving of anyone, but for manifesting the divinity. Even in the direst emergency we must not forget this fundamental lesson. We should remember the situation in which the Gītā was spoken. The exact time for following a high philosophy is when we are in a crisis. While fighting the enemy, let not India become small-minded, short-sighted or chicken-hearted. *Satyam eva jayate*, truth alone triumphs.

Swami Vivekananda is today acknowledged in India, perhaps somewhat belatedly, as a nation-builder. This very acknowledgment will do India some good. But more important is the acceptance of the age-old national ideal which the Swami redefined for India, and to deliberately build the national mind with that material. Whatever will issue out of that mind will be for the good. It is no use calling him 'patriot-saint' and 'nation-builder' if we do not accept the national ideal defined by him and if we reject the nation-building material which he placed before the nation.

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[1] Today when India appears to be passing through such a disturbed ideational state of mind, many may even raise their eye-brows and ask: 'What is the Indian way of life? Is it a new kind of Americanism?'

Swami Vivekananda defined in unmistakable terms what the Indian way of life is. He said: 'Religion and religion alone is the life of India, and when that goes, India will die in spite of politics, in spite of social reforms, in spite of Kuvera's wealth poured upon the head of everyone of their children.'

Liberation-mindedness is the dominating urge of the Indian way of life. Society, politics, education, law,—everything must facilitate man's march towards the liberation of the spirit. The key-word of the Indian way of life is not the gaining of sāmrājya (empire), but of swārājya (illumination).

Indian way of life consists of twofold movements of the soul, *pravritti* or outwardization and *nivritti* or inwardization, the former leading to the latter through experience and selection. In this way of life pleasure (kama) and wealth (artha) have to be enjoyed through righteousness (dharma). And dharma has to subserve the requirement of liberation of the spirit (moksha) from the bondage of matter.

> 'The national ideals of India are renunciation and service. Intensify her in those channels and the rest will take care of itself. The banner of the spiritual cannot be raised too high in this country. In it alone is salvation.' (V. 157)

Without whole-heartedly accepting this teaching of the Swami India cannot follow Vivekananda. We are facing serious times. Wordy and sentimental adoration is of no use. It is time India made up her mind as to what new shape she would give herself.

According to Swami Vivekananda 'renunciation and service' are not only the national ideals of India; they also constitute the building material for the nation. No ideals can be said to be the national ideals unless they can be practised by all individuals in all levels of society, and unless these ideals answer the various requirements of growing individuals until they reach the fulfilment of their lives, which according to the accepted view of Indian way of life is the liberation of the spirit. Moreover, the national ideals, while being true to the age-old spirit of the civilization, should also be perfectly workable in the world of today and in the unlimited future.

The national ideas of India, renunciation and service, symbolize the acme of human wisdom. They issue from the Vedas and are open to all future. They take perfect care of the temporal and eternal in man simultaneously. It is not a world negating idea but a God-positing ideal. They answer the needs of the growing individual and also of society and the nation as a whole. And those ideals are in perfect coherence with the Indian way of life.

Renunciation means a perpetual movement towards the higher and the greater until the Supreme spirit is realized. It is not only a monastic ideal in India. It is the universal ideal on which the Indian way of life is based. The ancient wisdom of India is succinctly put in the first verse of the Īśa Upaniṣad. It is said whatever exists in this changing world should be covered by the knowledge that everything is enveloped by God. And one should enjoy this world and protect the Self through renunciation. This is the only sane ideal for all human beings. Those who are called house-holders practice this ideal in a relative way and the monastics are expected to practice it in a total manner. The concept of sacramental marriage is a form of relative renunciation. Through such a sacrament the householder renounces all women and men, except the wife or husband.

In this manner every duty of the householder is to be sanctified by relative renunciation. The monk, however, has to practise total renunciation.

The ideal of service again has its roots in the Vedas. It was understood to be the only spiritually purposive pattern of human relationship for cementing a society in mutuality of helpfulness. Renunciation orients us Godward, service manward, and thus we grow inwardly while neither the earth nor the heaven is ignored.

This is the eternal ideal of India. In future it will be known that it is the universal ideal for all mankind. With the material of this ideal India will have to build herself anew. Then alone she will be able to stay true to her way of life. By doing so alone India will be producing those servants of mankind, who will bring light in darkness.

Those who acknowledge Vivekananda as a builder of modern India, are expected to accept this fact too. Not only that, they should also explore how they can carry through the implications of this fact into whatever they think and do. Thus alone they will be following Vivekananda. And in no other way.

There are quite a few other common segmentary emphases on Vivekananda's teachings, which if they go uncomplemented may create problematic results.

Sometimes we are apt to quote Swami Vivekananda to inveigh against priestcraft. And we may not remember and mention the handsome tribute Swami Vivekananda gave to the Brahmins and their services to Hindu culture.

Sometimes we are apt to emphasize Vivekananda's gospel of material prosperity, not at all mentioning his emphasis on keeping strongly up to the monastic tradition for both women and men.

Sometimes we are apt to quote from his gospel of strength and fearlessness and leave aside his emphasis on the life of purity, patience and perseverance.

Sometimes we are apt to lay stress on his scientific spirit and forget his extreme hunger to get drowned in *samadhi.*

Sometimes we are apt to be inspired by Vivekananda's whole-hearted love for Hinduism but we may not take so much notice of his dream of India with 'Vedantic brain and Islamic body.'

Sometimes we are apt to be enthusiastic about Vivekananda's great love and concern for the masses, and his emphasis on their education, but we may be very slow in accepting his definition of education as manifestation of perfection already in man. We may even reject outright his idea that religion is the core of education.

We may give the impression that we are working out Vivekananda's scheme of education, but while enthusiastically teaching sciences, we may have nothing to do with the teaching of Sanskrit.

Sometimes we are apt to cite Vivekananda's dynamism, activism, energism, but we may forget to sing his song of the Sannyasin.

Sometimes we are apt to appreciate Swami Vivekananda's imperative that we must go out and compare notes with other nations, otherwise we cannot keep pace with the progressive world of ideas and achievements. But it appears that often enough we are rather hesitant and even too timid to mention o of Vivekananda's salient teachings that Ind has a mission in the world, what to speak o Swami Vivekananda's dream of India's worl conquest.

If we could, some of us would not hesitate to expurge these words from his writings:

> 'The only condition of awakened and vigor national life is the conquest of the world by Ind thought.' (III. 277)
>
> 'We must go out, we must conquer the worl through our spirituality, and philosophy. The is no other alternative, we must do it or di (III. 277)

We are apt to think : Vivekananda's gospel is perfect but for this talk of world conquest. How can we take Vivekananda seriously i this matter? It is quite old-fashioned an harmful to talk of world conquest in these da of armament race and cold war. Of cours it is possible to argue that Vivekananda w not speaking of world conquest by arms b by Indian thought. Supposing that he d that, how can we go along with him? Ev religion or every 'idea' thinks that it has mission in the world. They all dream of wor conquest. If this idea is given sanction, the will be clashes of ideas which will be follow by booming of guns. Therefore we cann accept this idea of Vivekananda, though w accept all his other ideas.

Now here is a crucial issue. If we think we can follow Vivekananda without acceptin this teaching, we are deluded. Vivekanand did not speak of this idea as a passing remar It is not a frill of Vivekananda's ideas whi we can trim off to streamline his message. I is one of his fundamental ideas as far as Ind is concerned. We are not permitted to be any doubt about this fact, however much w dislike this idea. He said in very precise an clear words :

> 'The story of our conquest has been describ by the noble Emperor of India, Asoka, as conquest of religion and of spirituality. Once m the world must be conquered by India. This the dream of my life, and I wish that each o

> of you will have the same dream in your minds, and stop not till you have realized the dream. This is the great ideal before us, and everyone must be ready for it,—the conquest of the whole world by India,—nothing less than that, and we must all get ready for it, strain every nerve for it. Up, India, and conquer the world with your spirituality!' (III. 276-7)

This is the great General's special and urgent command. Do we think we can ignore this and yet be in his army? We have no way of doing it.

We have therefore to understand this idea of Vivekananda clearly and carefully. What did he mean by this conquest? Why did he want it done? The meaning of this conquest is made clear by Vivekananda himself in these words:

> 'Materialism and all its miseries can never be conquered by materialism. Armies when they attempt to conquer armies only multiply and make brutes of humanity. Spirituality must conquer the world.' (III. 277)

Spirituality, according to Vivekananda consists in, as he explains in the preface to his Raja Yoga, conquest of our outer and inner nature for the manifestation of Ātman, and becoming free. When he says, 'Spirituality must conquer the West' he means, India which has some unique spiritual heritage, should share it with humanity, so that the have-nots of the world may have it too. And thus they will be helped in Self-conquest. Vivekananda's idea of India's conquest of the world is only to help everyone in the world in Self-conquest. And the only weapons he proposed to have in his arsenal for this purpose were 'eternal love and service free.' The victory of which Vivekananda dreamed was not for defeating anyone but for vanquishing the cause of man's defeat in life, his spiritual ignorance. Vivekananda dreamt of world conquest, to prevent man from being defeated by the forces of life, world and māyā. He wanted every man to be victorious and to be established in his inalienable sovereignty of Ātman.

He wanted to do it because unless we aim at doing this, everything else is senseless and purposeless. If in India, through false humility, we think that it is none of our business, then, to say the least, we do not understand Vivekananda. And without understanding him, how do we propose to follow him? If we do not propose to follow him, why do we make so much noise about him?

Therefore, if we propose to follow Vivekananda, this awakening cry of world-conquest by India must ring and reverberate again from one end of India to another. And we must clearly understand the purpose and the methodology of this conquest. With infinite compassion for mankind as a whole Vivekananda said:

> 'Little do we understand the heart pangs of millions waiting outside the walls stretching forth their hands for a little sip of that nectar which our forefathers have preserved in this land of India.' (III. 317)

The very rationale of India's continuous existence down the millenniums was the sharing of this nectar. India's mission of world conquest has no alternative, if humanity is to survive. He said:

> 'The reason that we Indians are still living in spite of so much misery, distress, poverty and oppression, from within and without, is that we have a national idea which is yet necessary for the preservation of the world.' (V. 34)

There is no way of being true to Vivekananda's teachings without accepting this fundamental idea of his. When in India we do accept this idea whole-heartedly, we shall be surprised what a galvanizing and integrating effect it will have on Indian national mind. No one can dream of conquest without being strong himself. It is this strength India needs for herself. From strength can come other coveted blessings.

Sometimes we are apt to take Vivekananda inside our hearts, brains and homes. We understand that we require his teachings and inspiration. But most astoundingly we leave

Sri Ramakrishna outside the gate! This could not be done if we understood the source of Vivekananda's inspiration and message.

It is understood that in small discourses or limited discussions, academic or otherwise, all aspects of Vivekananda's teachings cannot be reflected on. No one is looking for that. What we intend to point out is that we shall be fully aware of the fact that India and the world needs the comprehensive Vivekananda, Vivekananda as he is in his totality and spontaneity, and not a fragmented Vivekananda, of anyone's partial choice.

(*To be continued*)

All references after the quotations in this article refer to the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*. The Roman figures stand for Volume No. and the Arabic figures refer to page number.

VIVEKANANDA

DILIP KUMAR ROY

O, resplendent soul of India, Beacon in our oceaned pain!
Sorrowless Bard of purity, no mire could mar nor squalor stain!
Whose regal footfall's marvellous cadence mellows still life's din and glare,
Who camst to exhort us, Kali's sons, with earth-born wings the skies to dare.

Thou sangst, Vivekananda: "Mother India calls, how can you sleep?
A truce to crawling in coward fear! Arise, awake love's troth to keep."

We wailed and moaned in bondage, groaned in helpless, lonely penury,
So thou, Redeemer, camst with thy Vedanta's sword to make us free.
Wont to quail at every shadow, we glimpsed no heights where courage glows!
Thy lightning advent clove the atheist haze in a flash, how — no one knows!

Thou sangst, Vivekananda: "Mother India calls, how can you sleep?
A truce to crawling in coward fear! Arise, awake love's troth to keep."

The epiphany of love and light, Sri Ramakrishna, missioned thee
To lead us, worldlings, onward to reclaim our lost divinity.
A miracle ray of Shiva, thou camst panoplied with Kali's powers,
And so thy wisdom's alchemy transmuted thorns to fadeless flowers.

Thou sangst, Vivekananda: "Mother India calls, how can you sleep?
A truce to crawling in coward fear! Arise, awake love's troth to keep."

Thou camst to build a rainbow bridge to unite the sundered East and West,
Chanting: "All are the Mother's children, none is an outcaste, all are blest."
How thy sun-bugle quelled the demon clouds of hate's disharmony
Proclaiming: "They must feel for all, who aspire to Immortality!"

Thou sangst, Vivekananda: "Mother India calls, how can you sleep?
A truce to crawling in coward fear! Arise, awake love's troth to keep."

In thy vast heart of tenderness the world was housed, to thee no one
Was ever an alien, even in paupers thou wouldst see Lord Narayan.
The endless, priceless jewels Heaven gave thee thou didst share with all:
May we thine Image of radiant Grace on the altars of our hearts install.

Thou sangst, Vivekananda: "Mother India calls, how can you sleep?
A truce to crawling in coward fear! Arise, awake love's troth to keep."

IDEAL OF INDIAN WOMANHOOD ACCORDING TO SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

ROMA CHAUDHURI

[Dr Roma Chaudhuri, M.A., D.Phil., Principal, Lady Brabourne College, Calcutta, who is a great scholar in Sanskrit and English and a writer of great repute, presents Swamiji's idea of 'Indian Womanhood' beautifully in this learned survey. — *Ed.*]

Perhaps, the golden rays of the just-arisen sun had respectfully just touched the holy feet of the great sage Yājñavalkya, when he, desiring to renounce worldly life, called his dear wife Maitreyi to him, and wanted to divide his earthly belongings between her and his second wife Kātyāyani. (Br. Up. 2-4). But straight came the vital question : 'If the whole world be filled with wealth, will that make me *Amṛta* or Immortal'? (Bṛh. Up. 2. 4. 2).

Startled, the sage replied frankly : 'There is no hope for Immortality through wealth'. (Bṛh. Up. 2. 4. 2)

Straight came, again, the second vital question, one of the most memorable ones in the whole History of Mankind : 'What shall I do with that which will not make me Immortal ?' (Bṛh. Up. 2. 4. 2)

With no reply to offer, Yājñavalkya gladly taught Maitreyi the kernel, the cream of all Philosophical Theories, all over the world, viz. Ātma-Tattva, the Doctrine of the Soul. (Bṛh. Up. 2. 4)

Those, indeed, were grand, golden, glorious, days for Indian Women, when, they, too, like men, were given the fullest opportunities to develop all the sides of their nature ; granted equal rights in all spheres — Family, Society, State ; and honoured as *Śaktis* or powers of men, without whom they were absolutely incapable of doing anything, or attaining an end.

But alas ! is it not a most inexplicable mystery of life, a most cruel irony of fate that even such women were destined, through the passage of time, to fall down from their high pedestal into the dust-heaps below, and thus, came to be besmeared with mud, the last traces of which have not yet been wholly washed off from them, even after centuries !

Now, think of the epoch-making age — the 19th Century, an age fraught with great possibilities, through the impact of Western Culture and Civilization on our own apparently decadent one ! But alas ! very few thought of women, confined within the four walls of the *Zenana*, deprived of the invigorating light of knowledge, ancient or modern.

But we Indians firmly believe that in times of dire need, God, in his infinite mercy, sends His own messengers. He cannot let the world, His own manifestation, crumble down and die, unhelped. So, He sends His own messengers to its rescue. And, during the later half of the 19th century, one such great and grand and glorious messenger was our beloved Swamiji, who was born, to quote Sri Ramakrishna, for *Loka-hita* or 'Welfare of the people'.

Really, *Women and the People* — this was the motto of his blessed life.

How touchingly does Sister Nivedita, his direct, closest and most beloved disciple say of her revered Master, in her celebrated work : 'The Master as I saw Him'.

> 'Our Master, at any rate, regarded this Order to which he belonged, as one whose lot was cast for all time, with the lot of *Women and the people*. This was the cry that rose to his lips instinctively, when he dictated to the phonogram, in America, the message that he would send to the Rajah of Khetri. It was the one thought, too, with which he would turn to the disciple at his side, whenever he felt himself nearer than usual

to death in a foreign country, alone: "Never forget," he would then, say, "the word is: *Women and the people*".'[1]

Swamiji himself, also, asserts vehemently, in his usual straightforward, forceful manner :—

> 'The uplift of the women, the awakening of the masses, must come first; and then only can any real good come about for the country, for India'.[2]
>
> 'In India, there are two great evils: Trampling on the women, and grinding the poor through caste-restrictions'.[3]
>
> 'We are horrible sinners, and our degradation is due to our calling women "despicable worms", "gateways of Hell", and so forth! Goodness gracious! There is all the difference between Heaven and Hell!'[4]

In this way, Swamiji, in the midst of his multifarious other important duties, found time to think of women, and devise ways and means for their immediate uplift.

Now, if you want to enable any one to advance, and rise higher the first thing that is necessary is to put before him or her a higher ideal, so that he or she may strive to attain it. Hence, in this connection, Swamiji, in the very beginning discusses, at length the ideals of Indian Womanhood, both in a general and a special sense.

What is an ideal?

Now, what is an Ideal? The ordinary view is that the 'Ideal' and the 'Actual' are two entirely different, not only that, also, opposed things. Thus, in this sense, the Ideal nullifies the Actual. But that is not at all our Indian view. On the contrary, the Indian view is that the Ideal is already, eternally inherent, in the Actual — it is never non-existent there, only non-known. So, the Ideal and the Actual are really, one and the same — differing only from the point of view of *knowing*, never from that of *being*. Thus, the Ideal is not a new *attainment*, but only a *manifestation* of what is already there. Hence, the example of a flower is, very appropriately, given here. Just as a seed inevitably blooms forth in a flower — that being its very nature — so does also Life bloom forth, manifesting all its glory and grandeur, all its beauty and bliss, all its sweetness and sublimity, all its purity and perfection to the fullest. And, this is the Ideal of Life, nothing more, nothing less.

Hence, the Ideal must be brought out from inside, as our eternal heritage, as our birthright, as our essential possession.

Swamiji's view on the Ideal of Indian Womanhood

Swamiji, an ardent upholder of Indian Culture and Civilization, also takes pains to make this clear to all repeatedly, untiringly. For example, compare the following :—

> 'Knowledge is inherent in man; no Knowledge comes from outside; it is all inside. The external teacher offers only the suggestion which rouses the internal teacher to work to understand things.'[5]

What he asserts, thus, regarding knowledge or Education, is true of all other Ideals, from all points of view.

Now let us come back to the point of issue here: What, according to Swamiji, is the Ideal of Womanhood in a general sense?

In one word it is this: Motherhood. Women are born mothers and mothers they must become. How? Not necessarily, by marrying only and becoming 'mothers' in a biological sense; but, what is more, in a real sense, in a philosophical sense. What is the philosophical sense of 'Mother'? Philosophically, it means a prop, a loving prop, which, so to speak, supports the entire universe of souls and matter. This is the celebrated '*Mātṛ-Tattva*' of India, which is but another name for the '*Sakti-Tattva*', the very foundation of the entire system of Indian Philosophy. And, according to our above contention that the Ideal is the Actual, the unknown Actual, there cannot be any distinction between the philosophical and the empirical. Hence, empirically, no less, a Mother possesses the very same characteristics. Hence, it is she who is the real prop, the living and loving force of the entire family.

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[1] *Op.* 356-57 (3rd Ed.)
[2] VI. 445.
[3] *Our Women*, p. 49.
[4] V. 22.

[5] I. 93.

A very common idea in the West, even today, is that in India, women have never been granted equal rights with men in any sphere, at all. While vehemently contesting the truth of such an entirely wrong view, we may however, take the liberty, here, of asserting, with all humility, that in one sense, undoubtedly, women in India have never been granted *equal* rights with men — for the simple reason that they have always been granted *higher* rights than they. In what sense, exactly? In the sense of being '*Mothers*'. The Indian view, in fact, never is that fathers and mothers are absolutely equal. Let this not be misinterpreted: Mothers are never *equal*, but always infinitely *superior*, to fathers. Even the *Smṛtikāras*, the mediaeval Law-givers, notorious for their unsympathetic attitude towards women, are unanimous regarding this point. Recall to mind, recall joyfully that wonderful and universally accepted dictum of Manu, the most ancient, at the same time, the most noted and most accepted of all the numerous Law-givers —

'*Upādhyāyān daśācārya,*
Ācāryāṇām śatam pitā
Sahasrantu pitṛṛn mātā
Gauraveṇātiricyate'

(*Manu-Smṛti* II. 145)

Ten times higher than an '*Upādhyāya*'
Is the '*Acarya*' venerable.
Hundred times higher than an 'Acarya',
Is the 'Father' lovable.
But lo! how great and glorious
One Mother, sweet benign
Surpasses thousands fathers easily
In glory and grandeur, fine.

Such is our glorious conception of 'Motherhood'. And, such is the glorious ideal of Indian Womanhood — Mothers first, Mothers last, Mothers always. Listen to the thundering voice of Swamiji :—

> 'Now, the ideal of women in India is Mother—the Mother first, and the Mother last. The word "woman" calls up to the mind of the Hindu, Motherhood; and God is called "Mother".'[6]

A legitimate question may be asked here: Why has '*Motherhood*' been selected, here as representing the very ideal of Indian Womanhood; and why not '*Wifehood*'? For, as it is, it is the wife, who according to our Scriptures and all religious dictum is the *Sahadharmini*, or the co-partner of a man, in all spheres, and so, absolutely equal to him, his very half, completing him. Take that very beautiful Text in the ancient and celebrated Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad: '*Sa vai naiva reme. Tasmādekaki na ramaté. Sa dvitiyamaicchat. Sa imam evātmānam dvedhā apātayattataḥ. Patisca patnī cābhavatām. Tasmād idam ardha bṛgalamiva .... Tasmadayamakaśaḥ striyā puryata eva*' (Bṛh. Up. 1. 4. 3). 'He did not feel any pleasure. Hence, no one feels any pleasure alone. He desired for a second. He divided His own Self into two parts. In this way — husband and wife were born. So, a wife is like the half of a shell. That is why, the empty space is filled up by a wife.'

Swamiji, in common with other Indians, strongly controverts the above suggestion, viz. to take wifehood as the ideal of womanhood:

> 'In the West, the woman is wife. The idea of womanhood is concentrated there—as the Wife. To the ordinary man in India, the whole force of womanhood is concentrated in motherhood. In the Western home, the wife rules. In an Indian home, the mother rules.'[7]

Why? Because, as pointed out above, the aim of an Indian Woman is not to be merely equal; but also, *superior* to man. And, the only way to be superior to man is to be 'Mother'. Further, as a *wife*, a woman mainly serves the purpose of her husband only. But as a *mother*, she serves the purpose of all.

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[6] VIII. 57-58.

[7] Op. cit.

Even her husband becomes a child to her after a while. Refer to that beautiful Marriage—Benediction—Sukta of the Ṛg Veda, composed by the Mari-Ṛsi Surya :

> '*Daśāsyām putrānā dhehi, patim ekādaśam Kṛdhi*' (Ṛg Veda 10. 85. 45)
> O pouring Indra ! give her fortune,
> And, sons full of strength.
> Give her ten sons sublime,
> And make the husband the eleventh.'
> (Ṛg Veda 10. 85. 45)

In this way, there can be no doubt whatsoever that the ideal of Motherhood is a much purer, loftier, sweeter one than that of Wifehood. Absolutely pure, absolutely unselfish, absolutely patient, absolutely forgiving, absolutely self-sacrificing, absolutely loving, absolutely wise — such is our mother, the fullest embodiment of the Universal Mother ! What higher aim can a woman have than to become such a mother, in the truest sense of the word ?

Ideal of Womanhood in a Special Sense

Having determined, thus, the glorious ideal of Indian Womanhood, in a general sense, Swamiji, then proceeds to depict the same, in a special sense, in an equally emphatic manner. Such an ideal, according to him, is Sita, and Sita alone. In fact, Swamiji had the highest possible reverence and admiration for this ever-green character of Sita, wife of Rama of the immortal Indian epic *Rāmāyaṇa.* How reverentially, lovingly and touchingly does he refer to Sita, repeatedly, all throughout :

> 'Sita is typical of India — the idealised India.'[8]
>
> 'There is no other Pauranik story that has so permeated the whole nation, so entered into its very life, and has so tingled in every drop of blood of the race, as the ideal of Sita. Sita is the name in India for everything that is good, pure and holy ; everything that in women we call womanly '.[9]
>
> 'You may exhaust the literature of the world that is past, and I may assure you that you will have to exhaust the literature of the world of the future before finding another Sita. She is unique, that character was depicted once for all. There may have been several Ramas perhaps, but never more than one Sita ! She is the very type of the true Indian Woman, for, all the Indian ideals of perfected woman have grown out of that one life of Sita ; and here she stands these thousands of years, commanding the worship of every man, woman and child, throughout the length and breadth of the land of Aryavarta. There she will always be, this glorious Sita, purer than purity itself, all-patience and all-suffering. She who suffered that life of suffering, without a murmur, she, the ever-chaste, ever-pure wife, the ideal of the people, the ideal of the gods, the great Sita ; our national God she must always remain.'[10]
>
> 'Sita has gone into the very vitals of our race. She is there in the blood of every Hindu man and woman : We are all children of Sita. Any attempt to modernise our women, if it tries to take our women away from that ideal of Sita, is immediately a failure, as we see every day. The woman of India must grow and develop in the foot-prints of Sita, and that is the only way.'[11]

Note the very strong, very emphatic, very clear language used by Swamiji here. This shows his very strong conviction, very firm faith, very deep-rooted idea that each and every Indian woman, nay, each and every woman of the world, must develop along the lines of Sita.

What must, then, women cultivate and acquire to become perfect ? They must cultivate and acquire, after Sita, the five great virtues of purity, patience, unselfishness, strength and spirituality.[12]

Thus, first, what does *Purity* imply ? It implies the fullest manifestation of inner essence ; or transparence, like a glass, through which, so to speak, the light of the soul can be seen clearly by all. In this connection, Swamiji gives the examples of a lamp inside a closed iron-box, and one inside a glass-casket. In the first case, evidently, the light of the lamp cannot be seen ; in the second, it can be done clearly. Our soul, inside the body, is like such a lamp. But through purity and unselfishness, we can make this outer covering more and more transparent, so that, finally, it becomes as transparent as glass. In this connection, Swamiji refers to the case of Sri Ramakrishna who, in this way, transformed the iron-casket to a glass one through which his inner light could be seen clearly. In exactly the same manner, 'Purity' means: purity of the body and the mind and the soul, so that the soul is not at all obstructed or hampered in any way.

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[8] IV. 71.
[9] IV. 72.
[10] III. 255-256.
[11] III. 256.
[12] IV. 72 ; III. 255-256.

Secondly, what does *Patience* imply. It implies the state of a '*sthita-prajña*' or '*sthita-dhī*', as mentioned in the Gītā (2. 58-72). Such an individual knows the real nature of the world, as well as of his own soul; and so, is not affected by worldly occurrences at all, viz. pleasure-pain, success-failure, birth-death, etc. Like a drop of shining water on a lotus-leaf, the soul, too, is *in* the world, but not *of* it. Compare that well-known sloka in the Gītā:—

> '*Duhkheṣvanudvignamanāḥ*
> *sukheṣu vigataspṛhaḥ*
> *Vītarāga-bhaya-krodhaḥ*
> *sthita dhīr munir ucyaté*'

> 'Unperturbed by sorrows great,
> Unattached to pleasure's balm.
> Free from greed, fear, anger,
> Such is a '*Muni*', whose mind is Calm'
> (*Gītā* 2. 56)

Such a sublime calmness is 'patience'.

Thirdly, what does 'Unselfishness' imply? It implies giving up the narrow egoity (*Ahaṃkāra*) and realizing the universal Selfhood (*Ātman*). If the Self, the Soul, the Spirit be seen in this way, then, evidently, there cannot be any hatred, any fear, any suspicion of any kind whatsoever, in any case at all. Think of that inspiring *Mantra* of the celebrated Īśa-Upaniṣad:

> '*Yastu sarvāṇi bhūtāni ātmanyevānupaśyati*
> *Sarva bhūtéṣu cātmānam tato na vijugupsaté*'

> 'He who sees all things around
> In the Self, without dread,
> And the Self in all things around
> Is free from all hatred'.
> (Īśa. 6.)

Such a supreme realization that '*sarvam khalvidam Brahma*' (Chand. Up. 3. 14. 1.), that the whole universe is *Brahman* or the Absolute, is 'unselfishness'.

Fourthly, what does '*Strength*' imply? It implies not at all brute force, not merely physical prowess, but the strength of the Spirit, that which comes, as Swamiji beautifully points out 'through touching the feet of God'. How inspiringly does the Upaniṣad assert — '*Nāyamātma balahīnena Labhyaḥ*' (*Mund. Up.* 3. 2. 4)

> 'Never is the Self attained
> By one who is weak'

'Strength' — this is indeed, the central theme of Swamiji's sublime Philosophy of Life. Thunderingly he gives a clarion call to all:

> 'All power is within you; you can do anything and everything. Believe in that; do not believe that you are weak; do not believe that you are half-crazy lunatics, as most of us believe nowadays. You can do anything and everything, even without the guidance of any one. All power is there. Stand up and express the Divinity within you'.[13]

Again:

> 'Know that every thought and word that weakens you in the world, is the only evil that exists. Whatever makes a man weak and fear, is the only evil that should be shunned.'[14]

Take again his saying:

> 'Our first duty is not to hate ourselves; because, to advance, we must have faith in ourselves first; then, in God. He who has no faith in himself, can never have faith in God'.[15]

Thus, '*Strength*' means such a supreme self-faith, self-reliance, self-effort.

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[13] III. 284.
[14] II. 236.
[15] I. 36.

Fifthly, what does '*Spirituality*' imply? It implies, in the most literal sense, Doctrine of the Spirit. So, it stands for the fullest manifestation of the real Spirit, the eternal Soul, the pure Self in us; or, in one word, the God in us. This belief in the inner, essential Divinity of each and every one of us, constitutes, in fact, the very basis of his sublime System. Time and again, untiringly, he calls upon us all to realize, without any further delay, this supreme fact that we, from the highest to the lowest, are all equally divine in nature. With firm faith he asserts thus repeatedly:

> 'Therefore, know that thou art He, thou art the God of the Universe. . . . You are the Self, the God of the universe. . . . You are all God. . . . You are the Soul of the Universe. You are the sun, the moon, and the stars; it is you who are shining everywhere. The whole universe are you. Whom are you going to hate or fight? Know, then, thou art He and model your life accordingly'.[16]

Thus, women, also, according to Swamiji, have to model their lives in this way, and realize their own essential Divinity fully. As a true Advaita-Vedantist, Swamiji makes no distinction between a man and a woman, and recommends the very same goal, as well as the very same means, for all equally, viz. the goal of realizing our essential Godhead; and the means of Knowledge-Devotion-Selfless Service. Hence, he gives us a perfectly wonderful 'Motto' of Life:

> 'First, let us be Gods, and then, help others to be Gods. "Be and Make"—Let this be our motto'.[17]

What greater destiny can there be for any one; what loftier goal?

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[16] III. 256.

[17] IV. 297.

Roman and Arabic figures in the footnotes refer to the Volume and page numbers respectively of the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, except where otherwise stated.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA, ART AND MOKSHA

E. R. MAROZZI

[Mr E. R. Marozzi, M.A., from Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A., has been in close association with the Ramakrishna Vivekananda movement. His interest being Art, he depicts here this aspect of Swamiji's personality and his views on Art in an interesting way. —*Ed.*]

Of man's ends, as classified by Hindu tradition are *dharma* (righteousness), *artha* (wealth), *kāma* (love or desire) and *moksha* (liberation) —the first three are meant to be intermediary goals which are to lead to the fourth as the final goal. Only thus do they have any significance; for man's actions if not pointed to moksha are but an endless treadmill of cause-effect sequences. Art as art is also a subsidiary goal and its meaning likewise depends upon its being oriented to moksha.

As an artist, writing about Swami Vivekananda in relation to art, the first thought is that the greatest of arts is life itself, for it is the culmination of all arts, and the perfection of it means moksha, and the product is the *jīvanmukta,* one of the greatest of whom was Swamiji. This is an art in which the objective is the goal of life and the product is also the same goal, for here the doer and the achievement become one — the knower of Brahman becomes Brahman.

In the days of classical Indian art—the Medieval era when the aesthetic texts *Sāhitya Darpaṇa* and *Śukranītisāra* were written—the practice of art, training and disciplines were oriented so as to lead to moksha. The artist was called variously *sādhaka, mantrin,* or *yogin.* As in the case of the worshipper, he recites the mantra describing the Deity and forms a corresponding mental picture, but instead of making offerings he proceeds to represent it in visible objective form. 'The artist, after ceremonial purification is to proceed to a solitary place. There he is to perform the "sevenfold" office beginning with the invocation and offerings. Then he must realize the four infinite moods — friendliness, compassion, sympathy, and impartiality. Then he must meditate on *sūnyatā* for the removal of his ego-consciousness, then he is to invoke the desired divinity. By reciting the *bīja mantra* and by meditation he should identify himself with the object represented. Finally, with the pronouncing of the *dhyāna mantra* the divinity appears "like a reflection" or "as in a dream"—this image is then the artist's model.'[1] In time this practice would lead to moksha as an end, the practice of art being the means.

Art is the result of the combination of artist-at-work, the medium, the instruments or tools, and the purpose or goal. Whereas the artist and sculptor have their material media and their brushes and chisels as tools, the musical composer has sound as his medium and musical instruments as his tools, the dancer has bodily motion as his medium and his body as a tool, the poet has words as his medium and writing instrument as his tool, and the goal in each case is to embody, express, and convey the aesthetic or spiritual experience of the artist; the greatest of arts would need the most perfected, awakened, and evolved artist, the purest (most valuable) medium, the most efficient tools and instruments, and the Ultimate Truth, the Absolutely Real as the goal. The most fully evolved and spiritually awakened man would be the illumined soul, the man of spiritual realization such as Swamiji — he is the greatest artist; the most valuable medium is the embodied soul (i.e. life itself); the instrument is the human mind; and the goal is Turiya — the fourth state of full awakening, the realization of the Upaniṣadic Truth *Tat Tvam Asi* — the identity of the individual soul and the Absolute Reality. This is characterized by the term *Sat-Chit-Ānanda* — Truth-Consciousness-Bliss (or Beauty). As John Keats states in his *Endymion*, 'Truth is beauty, beauty truth' — it is a unitary experience, for here the artist and the art become one, likewise the medium (jīva), instrument (mind), and goal merge into That — the Ultimate Reality which is One only though it manifests itself as many, the universe. In speaking of the aesthetic experience A. Coomaraswamy said that it is the temporary perception of the Oneness that underlies the universe, or as William Blake expressed this state :

> To see the world in a grain of sand,
> And heaven in a wildflower.
> To hold infinity in the palm of your hand,
> And eternity in an hour.

How is the product of such a transcendent art to be recognized? Only one of equal calibre can fully appreciate such a one, but the Bhagavad Gītā gives us some external signs : 'He who hates no creature, and is friendly and compassionate towards all, who is free from the feelings of "I and mine", even-minded in pain and pleasure, forbearing, ever content . . . whose mind is not shaken by adversity, who does not hanker after happiness, who is free from affection, fear, and wrath, who is everywhere unattached, who casts away all desires of the mind and is not pleased at receiving good nor vexed at receiving evil'. But that which causes this state and inspires the artist's creation is not to be seen with the eyes nor heard with the ears. It is this, instead, by means of which something is seen, heard, or known. 'That by which a man cognizes form, taste, smell, sound, and sense-contacts . . . this is verily That (Reality).'[2] 'That which the eyes cannot see but by means of which the eyes see, know that alone as Brahman. That which the ears cannot hear but by which hearing is perceived, know that alone as Brahman. That which the mind cannot know but by means of which the mind is known, know that alone as Brahman. It is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech of speech, the life of life, the eye of the eye. Different it is from the known and it is beyond the unknown as well.'[3]

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[1] Foucher, A. *Iconographie Bouddhique* pp. 8-11.

[2] Katha Upanishad II. 3.

From the standpoint of the personal God the goal of this kind of art is a state of identity with or nearness to the personal Ideal in a relationship of love. God is here the Ānanda — the ultimate aesthetic object and the beloved. Thus by this kind of art is achieved the complete fulfilment of all man's desires as expressed by the term Sat-Chit-Ānanda. In this Swamiji was indeed the paragon of artists.

The effect and influence of such an artist-jñāni on mankind and the world at large is clearly seen in the life of Swamiji. The dominant role he played at the Parliament of Religions at Chicago and the influence he had subsequently on the men and women of America and the world by his lectures, classes, teachings, and by his personality are facts of recorded history. Of course, he was a very special kind of jñāni. His Master called him a 'Thousand-petalled lotus' in comparison to whom other jñānis of the time were ten, sixteen, or at the most one hundred petals. To quote Sister Christine, a disciple of Swamiji from Detroit :

> 'Such a being is beyond all comparison, for he transcends all ordinary standards and ideals. Others may be brilliant, his mind is luminous, for he has the power to put himself into immediate contact with the source of all knowledge . . . He was in a class by himself. He belonged to another order. He was not of this world. He was a radiant being who had descended from another, higher sphere for a definite purpose . . . Is it to be wondered at that nature itself rejoices in such a birth, that the heavens open and angels sing paeans of praise. Blessed is the country in which he was born, blessed are they who lived on this earth at the same time, and blessed, thrice blessed are those who sat at his feet.'[4]

The profound influence he had on the lives of those who met him and knew him and especially the wholesale transformation in the lives of his disciples cannot be delineated here and have been fully told by the disciples themselves in some instances, such as Sister Nivedita and Sister Christine, and by others in the work *Swami Vivekananda in America* by Marie Louise Burke — wherein details of Swamiji's life in America, his influence on groups and individuals are well presented — the data having been gleaned from various newspaper items and letters — and in *Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda* published by Advaita Ashrama wherein various disciples and friends relate their experiences with Swamiji. To these we refer the reader. One instance we would like to cite from the latter work because of its unique character. It is told by Madame Calve, the famous singer:

> 'One day we lost our way in Cairo, I suppose we had been talking too intently . . . We found ourselves in a squalid, ill-smelling street, where half-clad women lolled from windows and sprawled on doorsteps. The Swami noticed nothing until a particularly noisy group of women in the shadow of a dilapidated building began laughing and calling to him. One of the ladies of our party tried to hurry us along, but the Swami detached himself gently from our group and approached the women on the bench.
>
> "Poor children!" he said. "Poor creatures! They have put their divinity in their beauty. Look at them now!"
>
> He began to weep. The women were silenced and abashed. One of them leaned forward and kissed the hem of the robe, murmuring brokenly in Spanish, "Humbre de Dios, humbre de Dios!" (Man of God!) Another, with a sudden gesture of modesty and fear, threw her arm in front of her face as though she would screen her shrinking soul from those pure eyes.'[5]

II

As to what the Great Swami said about this art of life or art of moksha is told in the set of eight volumes of his *Complete Works*. What he said about art in the ordinarily accepted sense of the term — in its traditional sense — we shall discuss here. In keeping with the above ideas and giving a sort of definition of art, he said :

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[3] Kena Upanishad I. 2-7.

[4] *Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda*, p. 152.

[5] *Ibid.*, p. 269

> 'The growth of man can only be gauged by his power of living in the higher atmosphere where the senses are left behind, the amount of pure thought-oxygen his lungs can breathe in, and the amount of time he can spend on that height— . . . Even luxuries are arranged according to ideas and ideals, to make them reflect as much of thought-life as possible — and this is art.' [6]

Is art imitation of natural forms, as Plato thought, or is nature imitating art, as Oscar Wilde thought? Or, is art something totally other than physical nature, as contemporary non-objective artists are inclined to think? These have been crucial problems for the art aesthete and the artist throughout the ages. Since the invention of the photographic camera these questions have come into prominence and the rebellion against photographic verisimilitude led to impressionistic and post-impressionistic movements in art followed by the non-objective and art-by-accident movements of today. The artist was thus called upon to prove both to himself and the world that art was not imitation or representation of nature but something inner — more profound and more significant. Swamiji had his own answer — complete and to the point :

> 'True art can be compared to a lily which springs from the ground, and yet is quite above it. So art must be in touch with nature — and wherever that touch is gone, art degenerates — yet it must be above nature.' [7]

He criticizes the standpoint of mere imitation :

> 'The secret of Greek art is its imitation of Nature even to the minutest details; whereas the secret of Indian art is to represent the ideal. The energy of the Greek painter is spent in perhaps painting a piece of flesh, and he is so successful that a dog is deluded into taking it to be a real bit of meat and so goes to bite it. Now, what glory is there in merely imitating Nature? Why not place an actual bit of flesh before the dog?' [8]

> 'The difference between Greek art and the art of other countries consists in this that the former faithfully delineates the living phenomena of natural life . . . The work of this school was to completely divorce art from religion and keep it restricted to the delineation of merely human life.' [9]

Asked about the difference between art of the East and the West he said :

> 'It is nearly the same everywhere. Originality is rarely to be found. In those countries (West) pictures are painted with the help of models obtained by photographing various objects. But no sooner does one take the help of machinery than all originality vanishes — one cannot give expression to one's ideas. The ancient artists used to evolve original ideas from their brains and try to express them in their paintings.' [10]

Just as he did not approve of mere imitation of nature he did not approve of art without content such as is prevalent in the galleries of today :

> 'Art has its origin in the expression of some idea in whatever man produces. Where there is no expression of idea, however much there may be a display of colours and so on, it cannot be styled true art.' [11]
>
> 'In the Paris exhibition I saw a wonderful figure carved in marble. In explanation of the figure, the following words were inscribed underneath: "Art unveiling Nature—that is, how Art sees the inner beauty of Nature by drawing away with its own hands the covering veils." The work has been so designed as to indicate that the beauty of Nature has not yet become fully unveiled; but the artist is fascinated, as it were, with the beauty of the little that has become manifest. One cannot refrain from praising the sculptor who has tried to express this exquisite idea.' [12]

Thus the greatest art would be to Swamiji that art which expressed the greatest ideas. So the Art of India gained his highest admiration for this reason :

> 'People who are very materialistic take nature as their ideal, and try to express in art ideas allied thereto. While the people whose ideal is the transcendent Reality beyond Nature, try to express that in art through the powers of Nature. With regard to the former class of people, Nature is the

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[6] *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, IV. 230.

[7] *Ibid.*, V. 186.

[8] *Ibid.*, V. 185.

[9] *Ibid.*, VII. 384.

[10] *Ibid.*, VII. 199-204.

[11] *Ibid.*

[12] *Ibid.*

primary basis of art, while with the second class, ideality is the principal motive of artistic development. Seeing some paintings in the West you will mistake them for real objects. With respect to this country (India), when in ancient times sculpture attained a high degree of perfection, if you look at a statue of the period it will make you forget the material world and transport you to a new ideal world.'[13]

> 'I had the opportunity of seeing the beauties of art of nearly every civilized country in the world, but I saw nothing like the development of art which took place in our country during the Buddhist period, (as also) during the regime of the Moghul Emperors.'[14]
>
> 'Their (West's) ideal is utility, ours art . . . Have you seen the granaries for keeping paddy? What an art is there in them! What a variety of paintings even on their mud walls! And then, if you go and see how the lower classes live in the West, you would at once mark the difference.'[15]
>
> 'The very soul of the Asiatic is interwoven with art. The Asiatic never uses a thing unless there be art in it. Don't you know that art is, with us, a part of religion? How greatly a lady is admired among us, who can nicely paint the floors and the walls, on auspicious occasions, with the paste of rice powder? How great an artist was Sri Ramakrishna himself!'[16]

After having had a brilliant discourse on art with Ranada Babu, expert artist and a learned man, it was remarked how the artist was astonished to hear his words, whereupon Swamiji began to hum the lines of a song, 'The controlled mind is a great treasure, the philosopher's stone, which can yield you whatever you want.'

III

It would be interesting at this point to note by way of comparison how one of the great spiritual giants of the West, Meister Eckhart, speaks of art. The close similarity in ideas between Meister Eckhart and Śankara has been shown by Rudolph Otto in his book *Mysticism East and West*. Meister Eckhart's remarks on art are sometimes in connection with pointing out some spiritual truth by way of analogy.

On the meaning of art he says:

> 'So much of pure aesthetic experience as is possible to anyone is his guarantee of ultimate perfect happiness. It is as artist-scholar (jnani) that man prepares all things to return to God, in so-far-as he sees them ideally and not merely sensibly.'

On this universe being God's artistic creation and all forms being within His mind:

> 'All creatures in their pre-existing forms in God have been divine life forever . . . They live in the Divine Mind — the hoard which is God's art.'

Therefore the artist, seeking content for his art, finds these forms within:

> 'Intellect is the temple of God wherein he is shining in all his glory. Nowhere does God dwell more really than in this temple of his intellect's nature.'
>
> 'There is a power in the soul called mind: it is her storehouse of incorporeal forms and intellectual notions.'
>
> 'To be properly expressed a thing must proceed from within, moved by its form; it must come not in from without, but out from within.'
>
> 'The most trivial thing perceived in God, a flower for example as espied in God (*svarūpa*) would be a thing more perfect than the universe. It is as an artist, seeing rationally and formally, that man sees things in their perfection . . . as far as his idiosyncrasy permits — as far as the recipient will allow.'
>
> 'What is doing Conrad to life? Not making something that could be mistaken for the man himself, but making the very image of him, that his expres is, as far as lies in the painter's power, his expres image as it exists reflected in the mirror of God's essence.'

About art as imitation of natural forms he says:

> 'To find nature herself all her likenesses have to be shattered and the further in, the nearer the actual thing.'
>
> 'An art made as far as possible according to the eye's intrinsic faculty and merely for the eye can be thought of only as a superimposition of illusion on illusion.'

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[13] *Ibid.*
[14] *Ibid.*
[15] *Ibid.*, V. 288.
[16] *Ibid.*

> 'If I paint my likeness on the wall, he who sees the likeness is not seeing me; but anyone who sees me sees my likeness and not my likeness merely but my child. If I really knew my soul, anyone who saw my conception of it would say it was my son, for I would share therewith my energy and nature, and as here so it is in the Godhead.'

> 'God is nameless and there is no knowing him by likeness . . . a portrait of the highest seraph limned in black would be a better likeness far than God portrayed as the highest seraph that were a pre-eminent unlikeness.'

On the objective of the artist's work Meister Eckhart says:

> 'Working is not for the sake of or to display skill, but to serve and praise the first cause of the work, that is the subject imaged in the artist's mind without idea of ownership. It is working for the love of God in any case, because the perfection of the work is to prepare all creatures to return to God.'

> 'If by reason of his skill he gets a good report in the world, that is to be taken as the gift of God, not as his due who should work as though no one existed.'[17]

Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, commenting and interpreting Meister Eckhart's philosophy of art says:

> 'Could the artist . . . attain perfection, becoming one with God, he would share in God's creation from time everlasting, natural species would be his image in time as they are God's, nothing would remain but the ever-present world-picture as God sees it. There would be no occasion for works of art, the end of art having been accomplished.'[18]

Having reached this point of development, the artist-jñāni may no longer create something outer as a production for he has achieved the end — goal of creation, the perfect Self. What was important all along in his development was not so much the perfection of the outer thing but what was happening to himself so that in the end he found that the perfection which he was at first seeking outside he found within himself. Now action may cease, for he has reached the fulfilment of all action in himself — doing is no longer necessary for he has achieved perfection in Being which is the end-goal of all action.

Sankara says in *Vivekachudamani*:

> 'By this Samadhi are destroyed all desires, which are like knots, all work is at an end and inside and outside there takes place everywhere and always the spontaneous manifestation of one's Real Nature.'[19]

So Swamiji, in speaking to an artist said:

> 'Whoever works at a thing heart and soul, not only achieves success in it, but through his absorption in that he also realizes the Supreme Truth—Brahman.'[20]

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[17] *Meister Eckhart* tr. by C. de B. Evans.

[18] *Transformation of Nature in Art*, p. 81.

[19] *Vivekachudamani*, 363.

[20] *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda*, VII. 200.

To those who have heard much of the personal appearance of the Swami Vivekananda, it may seem strange that it was not this which made the first outstanding impression. The forceful virile figure which stepped upon the platform was unlike the emaciated, ascetic type which is generally associated with spirituality in the West. A sickly saint everyone understands, but who ever heard of a powerful saint? The power that emanated from this mysterious being was so great that one all but shrank from it. It was overwhelming. It threatened to sweep everything before it. This one sensed even in those first unforgettable moments. Later we were to see this power at work. It was the mind that made the first great appeal, that amazing mind! What can one say that will give even a faint idea of its majesty, its glory, its splendour? It was a mind so far transcending other minds, even of those who rank as geniuses, that it seemed different in its very nature.

—SISTER CHRISTINE

SWAMIJI AND THE CORE VALUES OF OUR CULTURE

P. S. NAIDU

[Prof. P. S. Naidu, formerly Professor of Psychology in the Allahabad University is presently Hony. Professor, University Grants Commission, in the Women's Training College, Agra. His contact with the mission has been very intimate, and he has been a regular contributor to the *Vedanta Kesari*. In this article he succinctly posits the core values of our culture and Swamiji's contribution to it beautifully. — *Ed.*]

When a devoted Christian is asked 'What is Christianity?', he is ready with a telling answer, 'Christianity is Christ; Christ is Christianity.' Those who are simple and pure hearted in any religion, see the essence of their faith in the life and teachings of their prophets. These founders of religion lived what they preached. Their life was a concrete embodiment of the deepest values and convictions of the faith they established. When we who belong to the Hindu faith, are asked 'What is Hinduism?' we are inclined to enter into a long discourse on the fundamentals of our religion. This is eminently justifiable. Ours is Sanātana Dharma, and it is better to lay stress on the timeless and the immortal in it. But, for the simple, ordinary folk, and also for those who have no taste for abstract concepts — and they are many among the intellectuals — our answer to the question 'What is Hinduism?' should be simple. My answer, without the least hesitation is, 'Ramakrishna-Vivekananda' is Hinduism; Sri Guru Maharaj is the meditative and contemplative aspect of Hinduism; the dynamic, active aspect being Swamiji. In their lives, — it was in fact one life — we see Hinduism in its purest form, embodying the loftiest ideals and values of our religion. The teachings of the Bhagavad Gītā, the quintessence of the Upaniṣads, the lofty aspirations of the Vedas, the paths prescribed in the Darṣanas for realizing the sublime goal of life, the ideals of dharma found in our purāṇas — these and many other values — have been distilled, and the resulting elixir presented to us by Sri Guru Maharaj and Swamiji. So, with full conviction we may say 'Hinduism is Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda'.

In this article, I propose to indicate how Swamiji's life and teachings uncover for us the core values of Hinduism and Indian culture, values which may not be easily seen, and in consequence, do not grip our lives as they should. Swamiji's life was deeply motivated by profound *compassion* for the masses. Their ignorance and their suffering stirred his feelings to their very depths. He preached service and demonstrated by shining example what form this service should take. It should be worship of the divine in every human being, however humble or lowly his status be. It is this recognition of the Divinity in each man, woman or child that constitutes the first and foremost value in Indian Culture. The Mahāvākyas of the Upaniṣads were the guiding stars of Swamiji's life on this earth.

Who does not recall with thrill the thundering utterances of Swamiji, 'Arise, Awake, Stop not, till the goal is reached!' And what is the goal? *Self-realization* is that goal. Since Divinity is latent in each individual, it is every one's duty to blow that spark into a blazing fire.

This great value of our culture, namely, self-realization as the only worth-while goal of life, has been stressed by Swamiji in his talks on Education. 'Education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man'. The light divine within is obscured in most people. It is like a lamp in a cask of iron. no gleam of light can shine through. Gradually, by purity and unselfishness, we can make the obscuring medium less and less dense, until at last it becomes as transparent as glass.' It is this transformation of the dense iron into crystal clear glass that is enjoined by our culture as the highest aim of life and Swamiji has given new currency to it in the field of education.

An incident in Swamiji's life, when the Master was ill at Shyampukur, brings out another outstanding feature of our culture. The sentimentality of the devotees had reached a climax at Shyampukur. Several of them would fall into partial trances accompanied by contortions of the body whenever there would be devotional music. Swamiji was quick enough to forsee the dangers of such meaningless emotion. He addressed himself first to the young men. He would argue with them, advise them to practise control of emotions and sentiments and take nourishing food. And when he was convinced that in some the trance was the result of physical weakness, he even recommended the help of a physician. There is a profound lesson here to be learnt by those who seek self-realization. We are body and spirit. The body must be made an ally of the spirit in the latter's struggle for release. It should not hinder the spirit, so it should be kept in fit condition. It should be fed and clothed and tended with care. But all this should be done with the sole aim of making the body a fit enough Shrine, a pure enough tabernacle for the Mother to reside therein. Sri Guru Maharaj, on many occasions, emphasized the point, that it is not what you eat, or what you put on that matters, but what your mind is concentrated on.

Swamiji was himself a student of science, and during his academic career had mastered many branches of science. Later, when he was organizing the first sacred order of monks, he used to speak to the young Sadhus, with great erudition and skill. Not infrequently did he declare that the East should get its knowledge of science and skill in Technology from the West and that the latter should come to us for spiritual discipline. All this information is commonplace for those who have even a nodding acquaintance with Swamiji's biography. But there is a profound secret hidden behind this. Let us lift the veil a little and take just a glance at the beauty of the great idea (in fact it is a great ideal) behind it.

Science and technology demand exploitation of the material resources hidden in the bosom of the earth. So severe is the exploitation in, what are called, advanced countries, that the earth is getting gradually denuded. Now, perhaps what Swamiji had in mind was this: While the resources of the earth should be utilized for the welfare of man, yet the manner of utilization should be in conformity with the great ideals of our culture. Our culture calls upon us to treat the earth as Mother Earth. Just as the infant draws gently the life-giving milk from the bosom of his mother to the extent he needs it, no more and no less, so man is to draw his material requirements from Mother Earth to the extent that is good for him. Man has no right to *exploit* Mother Earth, and he will be less than human if he tries to enslave her. Thus, the Earth, the primary source of material wealth is endowed with sanctity in our culture. This, I am sure, is what Swamiji teaches us.

Even the hardened atheist will melt into tears when he witnesses the sweetness of the relationship between Swamiji and Sri Guru Maharaj. One has only to read that little brochure 'My Master', to see how tender was the relation between Master and Disciple. It was a shining example of true Guru Bhakti in the most exalted sense. *Reverence* in the purest sense was shown by Swamiji to Bhagavan Paramahamsa Deva. It was the great psychologist William Mcdougall who analyzed Reverence into wonder, self-submission, a touch of fear, and above all parental love.

Reverence results in Humility. The entire life of Swamiji, ever since he met his 'Master', and *accepted* him as 'Master' was inspired by *humility* towards Him who made God real in this very life. Perhaps we may catch a glimpse of the value of humility if we see what Swamiji has recorded about his own Master: 'And he then set about to learn humility, because he had found that the one idea in all religions is "not me but thou" and he who says "not me", the Lord fills his heart.

'... The Pariahs ... are a set of people so low that some of our books say, that if a

Brahmana coming out from his house sees the face of a Pariah, he has to fast that day and recite certain prayers ... By birth Brahmana stands for holiness, and the Pariah for the very reverse. And this Brahmana (Sri Paramahamsa Deva) asked to be allowed to do the menial services in the house of the Pariah. The Pariah of course could not allow that ... So, in the dead of night, when all were sleeping, Ramakrishna would enter the house. He had long hair, and with his hair, he would wipe the place, saying, "O my Mother, make me the servant of the Pariah, make me feel that I am even lower than the pariah."' (*My Master*, pages 41 and 42).

Aristocratic in intellect, in bearing, in manners, speech and even in body-build, Swamiji was, in the presence of Sri Guru Maharaj, a child. A master of the then dominant rationalistic school of thought, he acknowledged in the presence of his Master, the limitations of reason, and the superiority of intuition. Mystic experience was a living force with Swamiji all his life.

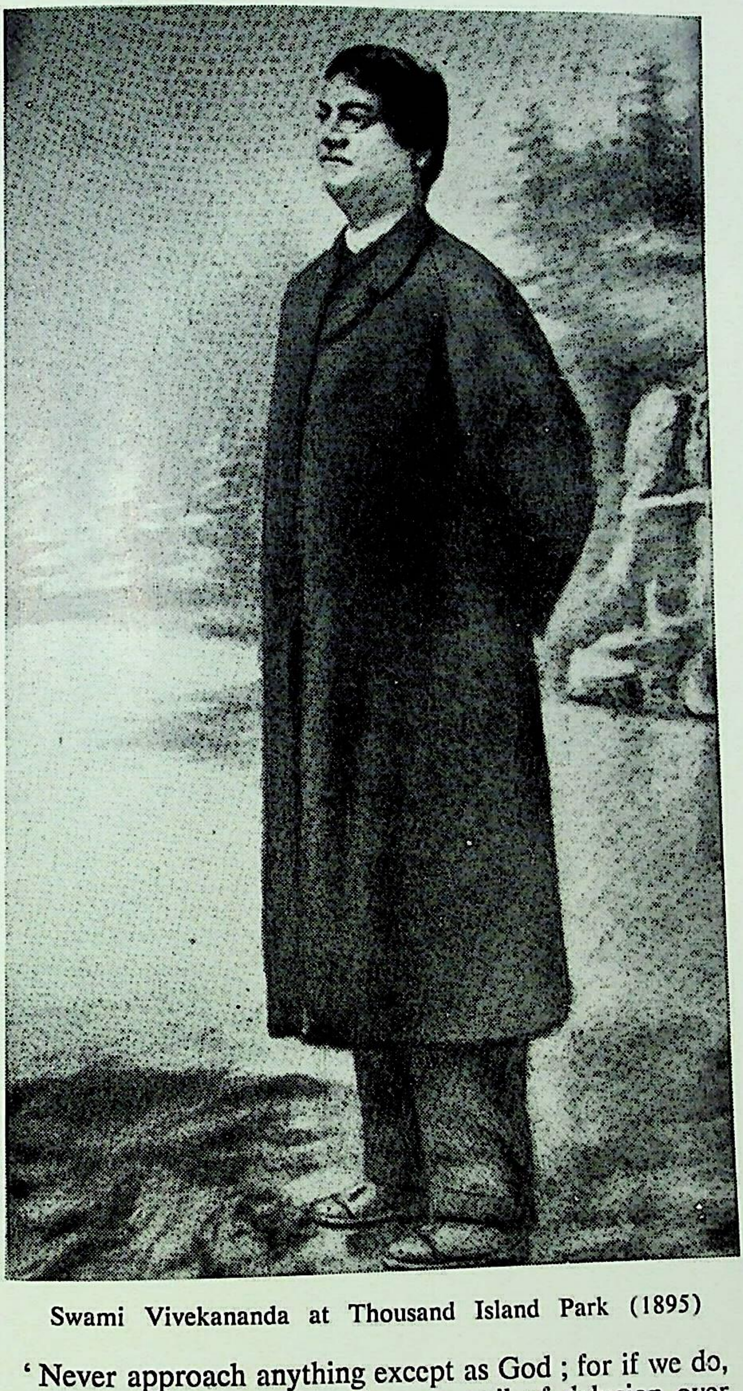
'Isn't it wonderful that Narendra has accepted Mother?' exclaimed Sri Paramahamsa Deva after a night of deeply touching experiences in the Temple of Mother. How revealing is the attitude of Swamiji to *Mother*, the mother who gave birth to him, the Holy Mother whom he served and the Universal Mother Kali. In our scale of values the Mother occupies the top-most place. Mother first, Father next, and Teacher next—that is the order in which children are asked to pay their respects to their elders. So great is our veneration for Motherhood that we worship God as Mother.

One of the most impressive lessons that we learn from the life and teachings of Swamiji is *tolerance*. This feeling arises out of a deep compassion for humanity. It also arises out of a firm conviction that the religions of the world are but various phases of one eternal religion. Swamiji's address to the Parliament of Religions carries the idea forward. The quintessence of Tolerance is contained in the following words of Swamiji : 'I do not understand how people declare themselves to be believers in God, and at the same time think that God has handed over to *a little body of men all truth*, and that they are guardians of the rest of humanity. ... Do not try to disturb the faith of any man... if you can get hold of a man where he stands and give him a push upwards, do so, but do not destroy what he has.' (*My Master*, p. 56).

Let me quote myself, 'Since every one is an embodiment of the divine essence, it is demanded of each one of us that we make an attempt to see the world as others see it, to try and feel as they feel, and understand and appreciate their view of life and their way of life. Having discharged these obligations we have to come back to our position with re-doubled strength and heightened conviction but with an added sense of humility. This is true Tolerance.' It does not contain, as an ingredient, the patronage which a person who believes himself superior, bestows on another of a supposedly inferior culture.

It is not synonymous with the attitude of co-existence. It springs out of a sincere appreciation of another's faith by one who is certain of one's own. Such Tolerance is dynamic, and is the only foundation for peace and goodwill on earth, because it arises not only out of a deep realization of the brotherhood of man, but of a deeper realization of the Motherhood of God.

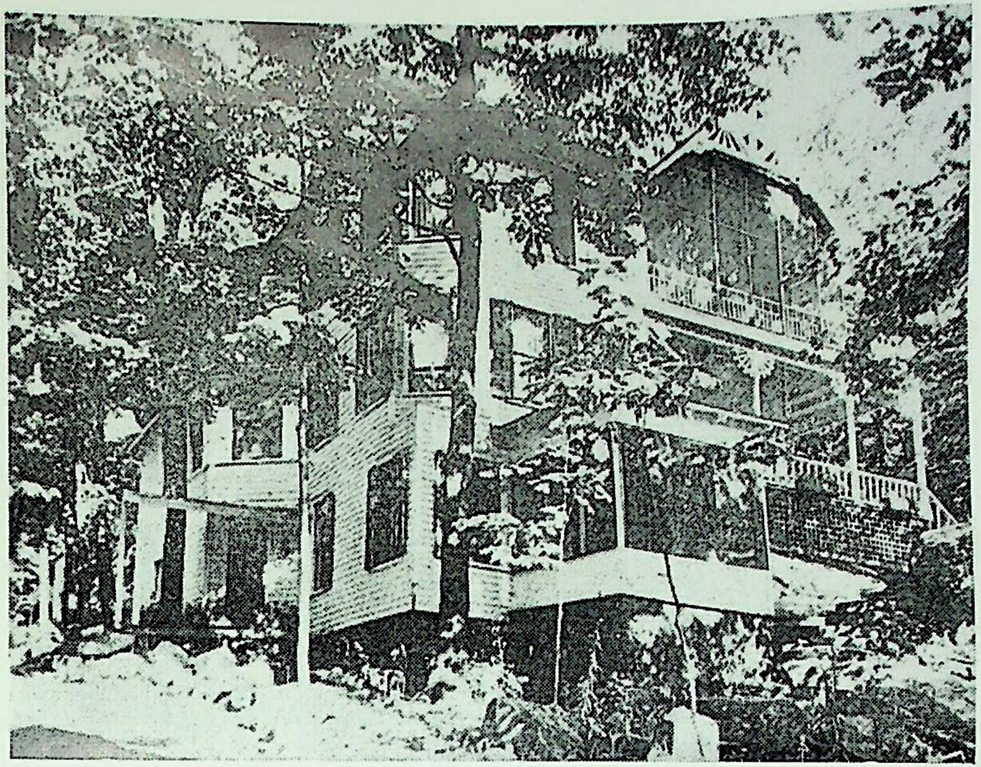
Man as the embodiment of the Divine, sacredness of the human body, sanctity of Guru-Sishya relationship, utilization of wealth in a spirit of detachment, Reverence for elders, exercise of Tolerance, and use of reason in due subordination to Faith — these are the basic values of our Culture that we learn from Swamiji.



Swami Vivekananda at Thousand Island Park (1895)

'Never approach anything except as God ; for if we do, we see evil, because we throw a veil of delusion over what we look at and then we see evil. Get free from these illusions ; be blessed.'

MISS M. ELIZABETH DUTCHER
(First owner of the Cottage at Thousand Island Park
now named after Swamiji—see page 252)



Vivekananda Cottage at Thousand Island Park, New York

[*Courtesy* : Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York]

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF VIVEKANANDA COTTAGE AT THOUSAND ISLAND PARK, NEW YORK

MALCOLM WILLIS

[Dr. Malcolm Willis received his Ph.D. in Sanskrit from Yale University in 1958. At present he teaches at The Gunnery, a school in Washington, Connecticut. He has visited India and is a member of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York. — *Ed.*]

It was at Thousand Island Park, New York, that Swami Vivekananda did some of his most important American work. Here he trained his greatest American disciple, Sister Christine. Here the plans for his work in India began to take form in his mind. He experienced, on the banks of the St. Lawrence, the *Nirvikalpa Samādhi*, as in the days at Cossipore. Here he wrote his poem, *The Song of the Sannyasin*, and he gave the teaching that has come down to us as *Inspired Talks*.

The Thousand Islands

The Thousand Islands (of which there are actually upwards of seventeen hundred), dotting the St. Lawrence River, which flows northward from the Great Lakes to Quebec where it empties into the Atlantic, were formed during the Glacial Period. Even now one notices how that great glacier scraped down to the very bones of the earth, for there are many exposed rocks on these islands, and such rocks are very much in evidence behind the house where Swami Vivekananda stayed. So beautiful was the natural scenery of the Thousand Islands that, from time immemorial, the Red Indians brought their dead here for burial. They called the place the Garden of the Great Spirit.

The St. Lawrence River was discovered for Europeans by Jacques Cartier, a Frenchman, in 1535. It was not, however, explored until 1615, when Samuel de Champlain found the Iroquois and the Algonquins, two Indian tribes, engaged in a war of extermination. The French espousal of the cause of the Algonquins earned for them the deadly hatred of the Iroquois, and this hatred was one of the inciting causes of the French and Indian War.

In 1778 the Oneidas, another Indian tribe who had in the meantime come into possession of it, ceded this region to New York State. The first white settlers, who established themselves on Carleton Island, were the so-called 'lumber-thieves', who simply helped themselves to the apparently inexhaustible supply of fine timber. In 1801 came a settlement of trappers, fishermen and hunters. By 1806 squatters had begun to clear and till the soil.

Beginning with the Embargo and Non-Intercourse Period of 1807-1808 and continuing until after the War of 1812, smugglers ruled the river and the islands. They grew rich importing liquors and goods of all kinds from Canada and exporting potash in great quantity. The French Road between Lyons Falls and Clayton was built in 1808, and this new route made the illegal trading easier and more profitable. As for the river, they used boats in summer and the natural bridge of ice in the winter.

After the War of 1812 a law-abiding spirit gradually developed and the young settlements

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NOTE: The materials on the history of the Thousand Islands I have taken almost verbatim from *The Thousand Islands* by Margaret McCormick Lantier (Saranac, N.Y. 1960). The material on Miss Mary Elizabeth Dutcher I have gleaned mostly from talking to elderly people who remembered her: Miss Margaret Otis, Ph.D., Mrs. Frances Fox, Mrs. May Cuppernall, Mr. Thomas Mitchell, Sr., Mrs. Emerson Cox. Mr. and Mrs. Chester Carlson did valuable research on her study in New York City and her teaching in Rochester. Swami Nikhilananda noted step by step the proceedings of the purchase and restoration of the house. — *Author.*

in the Islands region settled down to the serious pursuit of the lumbering business. Great rafts of logs were floated down the river to Montreal. Ship-building, begun in 1832, grew into an art as well as a great industry.

During the latter half of the nineteenth century it became the custom for certain Christian sects to hold 'revival' meetings on various of the Thousand Islands. As some one has remarked, humorously, 'each sect had its island and each island its sect.' People came and camped for months at a time singing, praying and listening to sermons. They hardly knew where religion ended and recreation began, so intense they were.

Wellesley Island, the second largest of the Thousand Islands group, 9 miles long, 4 miles wide, was dedicated to the sect called Methodist. Thousand Island Park, founded about 1850, at the southern tip of the island, was destined to have the cottage, built by Miss Dutcher, to which Swami Vivekananda came in 1895.

Miss M. Elizabeth Dutcher

Miss Mary Elizabeth Dutcher, the daughter of a poor farmer, was born about 1832 near Oswego, New York.

One imagines that she lived the life of a rural farm girl, with the difference that she was intensely interested in painting, and no doubt stood out from her companions by her unusual observations and perceptions. At any rate, she eventually had the means to go to New York City and to study art at the Art Students' League under William Chase. She was also a pupil at the Academy of Design. After her student days she settled in Rochester, New York, where she taught art. She was interviewed at her studio at 8 Chestnut Street in January 1881. The author of the article, which appeared in the *Democrat & Chronicle*, quotes her as saying, 'I prefer to call this my workroom rather than dignify it with the name of studio.'

Two of her paintings are now in the Thousand Island Park Cottage, and they definitely show the influence of French Impressionism. It is important to note this, because it shows that she was alive to current trends. Impressionism was the 'modern art' of the day, and because she was aware of it she could also be aware of the revolutionary ideas of Swami Vivekananda. There was an exhibition of her works at the Rochester Art Club in May 1883.

One gathers that she divided her time between Rochester and New York City. Certainly she was in New York during the winter of 1894-1895, when she heard and met Vivekananda.

She was apparently a colourful personality. Tom Mitchell, an aged carpenter of Thousand Island Park, who as a boy helped to build the wing on her cottage that she made for Swamiji, tells how she had a sort of harmless fly-trap which she took into the woods each evening to let out the flies which had become imprisoned in it during the day. Mrs. Cuppernall, former postmistress, recalls her hats bright with flowers, and adds that she was 'eccentric but very good.' 'There is a story that she preferred to choose a drunkard to paint her cottage in the hope that she might be able to reform him. That drunkard, incidentally, still unreformed, lived in the basement of her cottage years after she had died, as a sort of caretaker.

Miss Dutcher's contact with Swami Vivekananda shook her to the very roots of her being. One recalls the morning during the summer of 1895 when the Swami was inveighing against duty. Miss Dutcher began, 'But Swami, is it not our duty . . .' and got no farther, for Vivekananda burst forth with words meant to uproot this conception from her mind. Miss Dutcher, Miss Waldo tells us, was not seen for some days. But in the end, her relationship with the great teacher served only to make her adopt a more liberal form of Christianity. A Methodist before her meeting with Swami Vivekananda, she subsequently became a Christian Scientist. She had developed a tumour and a Christian Scientist said to her, 'If I cure you, will you become a Christian Scientist?' Miss Dutcher answered affirmatively, she was cured, and she kept her word. Strange as this act may seem, it can be explained, for Sister Christine has shown that Miss Dutcher's devotion to Swami Vivekananda was not greater than her adherence to certain conventions and prejudices. After becoming a Christian Scientist Miss Dutcher used her cottage as a sanatorium for people suffering from various ailments. She cooked for them and gave them mental treatments. In this way she met Miss Margaret Otis, who purchased Miss Dutcher's cottage after her death and owned it at the time it was bought by the RamakrishnaVivekananda Center of New York.

The Cottage

Originally a campground, Thousand Island Park slowly became a village of cottages, many of them built upon what had at first been only foundations for tents. Consequently the houses are overcrowded together. The usual type is two rooms below, two above, each floor with its own porch. The roof is peaked. Sometimes rooms are added as needed, or as the family grows.

Miss Dutcher built her cottage at the eastern end of the Park on a rock on the rise of the hill that is behind the village. This location she selected no doubt with the Biblical verse in mind. It was in 1885, and with her were her mother and her sister. She built the prescribed four rooms, the upper two of which were cut up into extremely small cubicles for the accommodation of guests. To the two porches she added a third porch facing roughly south, and subsequently she added a kitchen.

Ten years later, for the convenience of Swami Vivekananda she added a wing on the west side of the house. Because of the steepness of the slope on which the house stands there could be three stories here as opposed to the two on the east. On the third floor was Swamiji's room, one door of which led out on to the upper porch where he gave his evening talks. The room beneath on the second floor was the study in which he gave the morning lessons which Miss Waldo has preserved for us as *Inspired Talks*. The room beneath that was used as a bedroom by one of the students present during the summer of 1895. Miss Dutcher had a staircase built outside the Swami's room so that he might come and go as he liked.

In later years Miss Dutcher added a studio on the second floor, next to the study, and below it still another bedroom.

The Summer of 1895

Swami Vivekananda stayed and taught at Thousand Island Park from June 19 to August 6, 1895. He was in extremely good spirits at this time and was happy to be able to teach such an earnest group of American students. He was in a very passion of renunciation, as his composition at this time of 'The Song of the Sannyasin' shows.

Miss Waldo has stated in the introduction to *Inspired Talks* that twelve disciples followed the Swami from New York. Exactly who those twelve were it seems impossible to reconstruct at this late date. Of those we know there were: Miss Dutcher, Miss Waldo, Mrs. Funke, Miss Christine Greenstidel, Miss Ruth Ellis, Dr. Wight, Mr. Leon Landsberg, an aging actress known only as Stella, and the Frenchwoman, Marie Louise. It is also possible that Dr. Wright, the Harvard professor who was an admirer of the Swami, was there.

Miss Waldo and Mrs. Funke live for us through the lively prefaces they have written for *Inspired Talks*. We know Sister Christine through her journal. Miss Dutcher is vivid to those who have had the opportunity of speaking to people who have known her. But the rest, except in so far as Sister Christine mentions them, have faded into oblivion. Perhaps the other three were sufficiently lacking in colourfulness that Sister Christine did not think to mention them.

It was Christine Greenstidel who became Sister Christine, Leon Landsberg Swami Kripananda, and Marie Louise Swami Abhayananda. The latter two defected from the teaching of Swami Vivekananda, though Swami Abhayananda organized at least two Vedanta Centers in America, on the West Coast.

In thinking of this group that followed Swami Vivekananda to Thousand Island Park, it is well to remember a remark of Sister Nivedita's in *The Master as I saw Him*. She says that Swami Vivekananda always saw people larger than they were because he saw through to their utmost possibility of unfoldment — an unfoldment that might take many lives for realization. We must be careful then in judging them, for who can tell what will be the end result of the enormous push which the Swami gave to their spiritual development?

In order to welcome Swami Vivekananda to her cottage Miss Dutcher painted a huge scroll with the words 'Welcome to Swami Vivekananda.' When Swamiji left the islands he said, 'I bless these Thousand Islands.'

In this way he gave to The United States a genuine holy place.

The Interim

After the summer of 1895 Miss Dutcher used the cottage as a studio and as a boarding house. Every summer she gave an exhibition of her work and villagers felt, when leaving, compelled to buy at least one of the modestly priced paintings — for she gave the impression of being terribly poor.

In 1902 Miss Josephine MacLeod, inspired no doubt by Swamiji's death, made a pilgrimage to the cottage (she had not been at the classes), went to the Swami's room, and as the story goes, wept and wept. Other students came, too.

After Miss Dutcher's death in 1922 artists used to rent the house from Miss Margaret Otis, who had bought it. Miss Otis was herself a person of rare charm and force of character; she knew Sanskrit, and it was particularly fitting that her copies of the Rigveda and other Sanskrit works should repose in the house in which Vivekananda stayed. She spent the summers from 1929 to 1933 there. One day, she said, out of nowhere a man appeared at the door. Coming in, he saw a staff hanging in the dining room. 'That is Swami Vivekananda's staff,' he said, 'May I have it?' Miss Otis gave it to him and he disappeared. Could it have been Leon Landsberg? After 1933 Miss Otis left the house because of what she explained as 'ghosts' and went to live in the cottage, 50 yards from Miss Dutcher's, where her brother and two sisters lived.

The house was vacant from 1933 to 1948 except for the tenancy in the basement of the drunken housepainter, Dan Eager.

Rediscovery

In June or July of 1947 Swami Nikhilananda visited the cottage with Mrs. Davidson and two other students. They had found the location through Miss MacLeod, who had put them in touch with Mrs. Emerson Cox, who as a child had been a ward of Miss Dutcher's. George Cox, her son, took the party to the cottage.

They found it in utter disrepair. The boards were giving way on the verandah. An upper porch was caving in and the stairway to it was too rickety to climb. The unfinished inside, painted grey, presented a grim aspect. From the ceiling great strips of wallpaper sadly hung down. One of the main supports holding up the house had rotted away allowing one side of the structure to sink. Swami Vivekananda's room shook underfoot. Debris was everywhere. Not only inside but outside was chaos. The ground around was full of weeds, underbrush, small and big trees.

Swami Nikhilananda felt that though it was worth having seen, it was beyond saving. However, when he wrote to the then President of the Ramakrishna Mission, Swami Virajananda, about it, the latter said that it should be acquired. He added that as it was one of the only true sacred places of pilgrimage in America it should be bought and that if the

New York Center did not buy it, money would be sent from India. He added that since he could not visit it in this life he would visit it after his death in his subtle body. Mrs. Davidson, too, said that if Swami Nikhilananda did not purchase it, she would.

That same fall Swami Nikhilananda, Swami Ghanananda, Mr. Goodridge, late President of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, Mrs. Davidson and another student visited the cottage and decided to acquire it. Miss Otis was approached in the late fall of 1947. She said the building had been sold for firewood for $500. It was finally arranged that the man who had purchased it should be reimbursed and that Miss Otis should be paid an additional $500. The money for repairs was donated by students and admirers of Swamiji.

The restoration of the cottage began in the early spring of 1948. One of the students came to Thousand Island Park to oversee the work. A student and his son put in all the electric wiring. A group of women students came early in June and fixed curtains, repainted old furniture, purchased necessary articles, planted flowers, etc. The kitchen, which contained the old wood stove used in Swami Vivekananda's time, was modernized. Modern plumbing was installed. The shed-like structure over Miss Dutcher's studio was transformed into a sleeping porch. On the outside of the house the original fluted and scrolled decorations were restored by Tom Mitchell, Sr. who had worked on the original wing added by Miss Dutcher for Swami Vivekananda. The summer of 1950 saw fireplaces added to the study and to the bedroom below it.

The cottage was ready for occupancy by July 1948. Swamis Aseshananda, Satprakashananda, Yatiswarananda, as well as Swami Nikhilananda spent the summer there. Earth from holy places in India was buried outside. Ganges water was poured into the St. Lawrence. Puja and Homa were performed in the garden.

Swamiji's room is used as a chapel. On the floor is the rug which Swami Vivekananda had sent by the Maharaja of Khetri to Mr. and Mrs. Leggett on the occasion of their marriage. After their death the carpet was in Ridgely Manor and it was given for its present use through the kindness of their daughter Mrs. Frances H. Leggett. The room also contains, besides pictures of Swamiji, Sri Ramakrishna and Holy Mother, the busts of Swamiji and Sri Ramakrishna made by Malvina Hoffman, the distinguished American sculptor.

An interesting sidelight is cast by the fact that the manuscript of *The Song of the Sannyasin* turned up in the trash that was thrown out at the time of the initial renovating of the cottage. This was picked up by the electrician's son, who kept it for seven years. Eventually he gave it to Swami Nikhilananda, who asked him why he had kept it so long. He said he did not know.

Two other cottages at the foot of the hill have been given, one by Mrs. Davidson, the other by another student. Mrs. Davidson called her cottage Sri Sarada Kutir and it houses some of the women devotees during the summer. The other cottage, called Vedanta Cottage, is used by Swami Nikhilananda for his writing.

The summers since the Rediscovery

At first the summers at Vivekananda Cottage were rather informal. Swami Nikhilananda invited certain students to spend the summer or part of it there. Others, through his invitation, stayed at the local hotel. Still others came, informally, to have a look at the house where Swami Vivekananda had stayed in 1895. Each summer students from the various Vedanta Centers in the United States come on pilgrimage to the Cottage.

Since the beginning an Arati service has taken place in the late afternoon. This has always formed, so to speak, the pivot of the day. But from the first also there have been classes, at least in embryo. Originally simply evening readings usually beginning with *Inspired Talks*, these classes developed into readings with discussion by the Swamis and students. Late in the '50s these classes became more formal. Changed from evening to morning, they now consist of scholarly explanations of the Upanishads by Swami Nikhilananda. This past summer (1962) he chose the sixth chapter of the Chhāndogya. The class lasted for two weeks, and students were encouraged to stay for the whole session, not to drop in for just a few days.

These summers have had their light moments, too. Even as Swami Vivekananda often cooked food for his American disciples, so the Swamis of the present day hold picnics and outings and feed their students with Indian preparations.

Vivekananda Rock

In the early days of the rediscovery of the house some of the students fixed upon a rock a good half mile behind the cottage as being the most likely place of Swami Vivekananda's samadhi. It is a beautiful flat rock beneath a great oak tree, overlooking a broad expanse of meadow and commanding an inclusive view of the river. Year after year students have made this rock a place of pilgrimage and it has become known as Vivekananda Rock.

Swami Vivekananda had a magnetic personality, associated with tranquillity. Whether he was walking in the street or standing in a room, there was always the same dignity.

He had a great sense of humour and as a natural correlative, much pathos and pity for affliction. He was a charming companion and entered with ease into any environment he found. And I found that all classes of educated persons that he was brought in contact with looked up to and admired the innate nobility that was in the man. One felt all times that he was, to use a modern expression, 'conscious of the presence of God'. In walking, travelling, and leisure times, there constantly came from him some hardly formulated invocation or expression of devotion.

As a teacher he had a great capacity for perceiving the difficulty of an inquirer, and would elucidate it with great simplicity and point to its solution. At the same time he could enter into great intricacies of thought.

Although if we were enlightened we should see Deity in every manifestation, nevertheless it is a great boon when we can perceive it as patent in noble and holy men. One of such was the Swami Vivekananda.

— E. T. STURDY

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Oh, the sublime teaching of Swami Vivekananda! No nonsense, no talk of 'astrals', 'imps', etc., but God, Jesus, Buddha. I feel that I shall never be quite the same again for I have caught a glimpse of the Real.

Just think what it means to listen to a Vivekananda at every meal, lessons each morning and the nights on the porch, the eternal stars shining like 'patines of bright gold'! In the afternoon, we take long walks and the Swami literally, and so simply, finds 'books in the running brooks, sermons in stones, and good (God) in everything.' And this same Swami is so merry and fun-loving. We just go *mad* at times.

— MARY C. FUNKE

SWAMIJI AND HIS MISSION

T. S. AVINASHILINGAM

[Sri T. S. Avinashilingam, M.P., Secretary, Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore Dt., is an author of many books. This article forms a chapter from a book under preparation by him on the Educational Philosophy of Swami Vivekananda. — *Ed.*]

Swami Vivekananda was keenly aware of the great work that had to be done in India and abroad. India had to be resuscitated and rebuilt. A new strong, virile, independent India, based on the great spiritual qualities of love, unselfishness and service had to rise on the ashes of its immediate past of slavery and poverty. While material wealth was necessary, he regarded the human element as being far more important. This is indeed very clear from the letters he wrote to his Madras friends from Yokhohama (Japan) on the way to America as early as in July, 1893, i.e. before the meeting of the Parliament of Religions at Chicago. 'India wants the sacrifice of at least a thousand of her young men. How many men, unselfish, thorough-going men is Madras now ready to supply,' he asks, 'to struggle unto life and death to bring about a new state of things? — sympathy for the poor and bread to their hungry mouths, and enlightenment to the people at large.'[1] After reaching the United States, he writes again in the same strain: 'A hundred thousand men and women, fortified with the eternal faith in the Lord and nerved to lion's courage by their sympathy for the poor, the fallen and the down-trodden, who will go over the length and breadth of the land preaching the Gospel of help, the Gospel of Social raising up and the Gospel of Equality are necessary.'[2]

Even after his great success in the Parliament of Religions and the United States and the glorious and tumultuous welcome he received everywhere in his whirlwind campaign throughout India, he harps upon the same question. His experience had made his visions clearer. He sees with the clarity of a prophet, that what we need are not dogmas and doctrines but men. He writes on the 6th April, 1897, 'We have brains but no hands. We have the doctrine of Vedanta, but we have not the power to reduce it to practice.

'In our books, there is the great doctrine of universal equality, but in work we make great distinctions. It was in India that unselfish work of the most exalted type was preached, but in practise, we are awfully cruel and heartless and unable to think of anything else besides our own mass-of-flesh bodies. . . . India will awake again if any one could love with all his heart the people of the country — bereft of the grace of affluence, of blasted fortune, down-trodden, ever-starved, quarrelsome and envious. Then only will India awake, when hundreds of large-hearted men and women, giving up all desires of enjoying the luxuries of life, will long and exert themselves to their utmost for the well-being of their countrymen.'[3]

The great mission that he set before himself was to train such men, men of purity, strength and sacrifice. They were to be trained not only in following a life of dedication, but also of service. That was the origin of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission.

Shortly after the passing away of the Master in 1886, a monastic order was organized by his sanyasin disciples, led by Swami Vivekananda; its objective was to train monks for the teaching of the universal, non-sectarian principles of religion exemplified in the Master's life and to carry on with the assistance of the lay disciples, missionary and philanthropic work, looking upon all as the manifestation of the divine, irrespective of caste, colour or creed. First begun in 1897 as the Ramakrishna Mission Association, it was later registered in 1909 as the Ramakrishna Mission under Act XXI of 1860. The life history of the original founders in Baranagore and Alam Bazaar Maths is an inspiring one. For many days they did not have anything to eat and had only tattered clothes to wear. A mat on the floor was their bed even in the bitterest cold. There was only one presentable piece of cloth, which was common property and was hung up on a string, so that whosoever had to go out could wear it.

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[1] Page 8, Vol. V, *Swami Vivekananda's Complete Works.*

[2] Page 12 *ibid.*

[3] Page 96, Vol. V, *Ibid.*

Immersed in the thought of God, they did not care what befell their external life. It was austerity of the highest type, but of a joyous, creative type. They lived many weeks and months without knowing where their next meal would come from. Only their devotion to the Master and love for their leader and their brother-disciples kept them together.

After the return of Swami Vivekananda from America, events took a brighter turn. His recognition in the West brought with it a great deal of admiration and following in India. The message of the Master began to spread. Under the inspiration of the Swami, many young men gave up their worldly life and dedicated themselves to purity and continence and joined the organization. The life at the Math in those days was really hard. But under the guidance of the direct disciples of the Master, the young men were spurred to great sacrifice and to the bearing of great sufferings, and the work spread throughout the country and abroad.

The ideal of the Mission was to train a body of dedicated workers, who while disciplining themselves for spiritual advancement, would work for the good of the world, by looking upon their work as worship. Explaining this idea of work as worship, Swami Vivekananda said :

> 'All the work you do is subjective and is done for your own benefit. God has not fallen into a ditch for you and me to help Him out, by building a hospital or something of that sort. He allows you to work. He allows you to exercise your muscles in this great gymnasium, not in order to help Him but that you may help yourself. Do you think even an ant will die for want of your help? Most arrant blasphemy. The world does not need you at all. The world goes on, you are like a drop in this ocean. A leaf does not move, the wind does not blow without Him. Blessed are we that we are given the privilege of working for Him, not of helping Him. Cut out this word "help" from your mind. You cannot help; it is blaspheming. You are yourself at His pleasure. You worship! When you give a morsel of food to the dog, you worship the dog as God. God is in that dog. He is the dog. He is all and in all. We are allowed to worship Him. Stand in that reverent attitude to the whole universe and then will come perfect non-attachment. This should be your duty. This is the proper attitude of work.'[4]

This new attitude gave a new turn to the concept of monasticism and monastic life, which is one of the main contributions of the Ramakrishna Mission to modern Indian life. Previously monks and sanyasins cut themselves away from society, retired to forests or caves and carried on their religious practices, rejecting the world as sin. But with this new revolutionary doctrine, the cloistered monasticism of old gave place to a new method of spiritual life, namely that of service to the poor, the sick, the down-trodden and the untouchable, looking upon them as representatives of the divine. With such an attitude, work became worship and service became converted into spiritual *sādhana*. All work done with the idea of getting a return hinders our spiritual progress and in the end brings misery. When we do work as worship, we give up all the fruits of work unto the Lord. Just as water cannot wet the lotus leaf, so work cannot bind the unselfish man, by giving rise to attachment to results. In fact, it will help him to become free from bondage. Thus we see in various parts of India today, the workers of Sri Ramakrishna Mission deeply engaged in work of various kinds, running schools and colleges, conducting dispensaries and hospitals, organizing relief work during plague, cholera,

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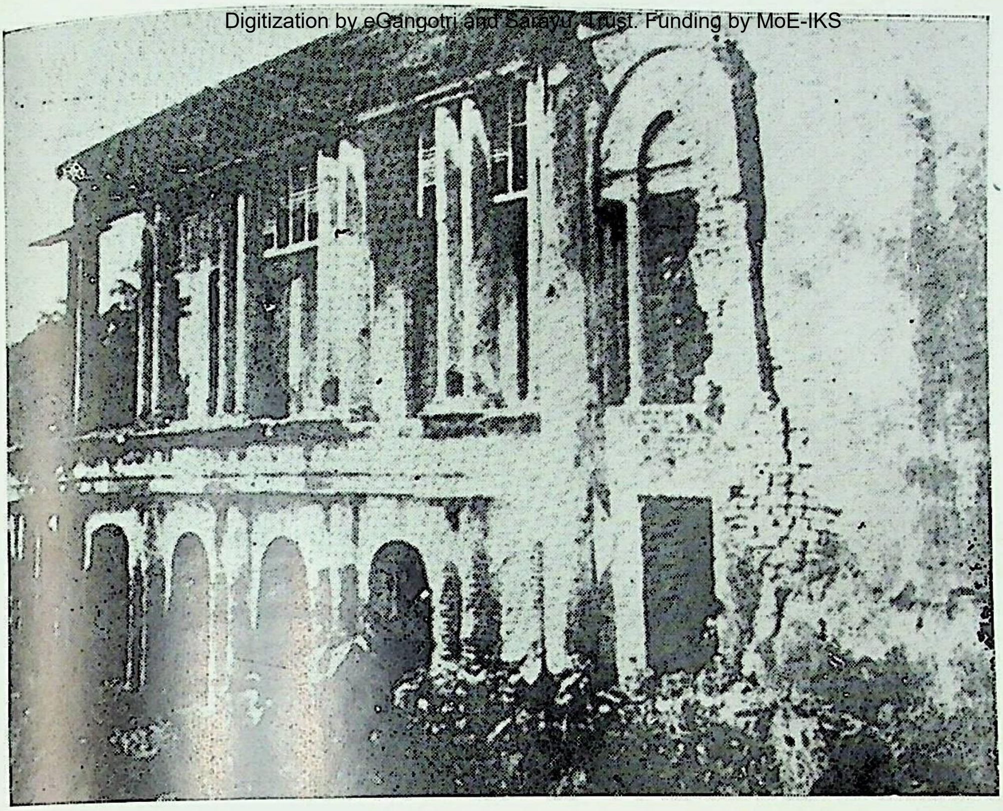
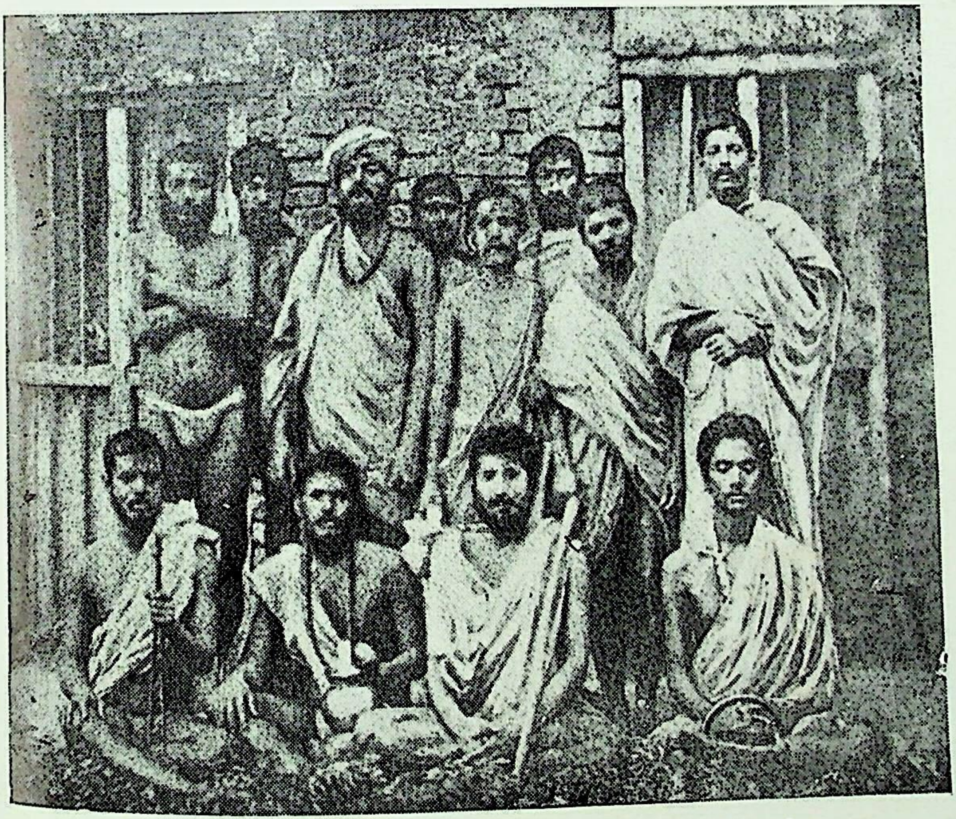
[4] Pages 172-3, Vol. V, *Ibid.*



First Math of the Ramakrishna Order at Baranagore (1886)



Swami Vivekananda, 3rd from left (standing), with brother disciples at the Baranagore Math (1887)

famine and all kinds of other reliefs, with the basic idea that they are serving the Lord in the form of the poor and the sick in various shapes.

It has now centres all over the world, its work is by no means limited to them. In fact, they represent a spiritual movement, which covers a field much vaster than the physical limits of those centres. The significance of their spiritual message is much greater than what we can perceive at the present day. When the world is daily becoming smaller due to the inventions of science, the narrow barriers placed on our minds and thoughts of earlier generations have been shaken. And so the need of the hour is a universal message, which will appeal to all countries and nationalities, to men and women of all creeds and races. What is required is a new faith which will synthesize all existing faiths and have a breadth of outlook, which will accommodate all spiritual experiences and aspirations. There was the need for men, to deliver such a universal message. Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, the great Master and his valiant disciple came to fulfil that need. As Mr Christopher Isherwood has stated,

> 'Spiritual Truth is eternal, but it has to be restated and redemonstrated in human life, in order that it may solve the varying problems of each succeeding epoch. Ramakrishna's teaching is our modern Gospel. He lived and taught for us; not for the men of two thousand years ago . . . Sri Ramakrishna is the first teacher to deliver a message consciously addressed both to the East and the West, as two separate though inter-related cultures. Swami Vivekananda carried his message to America and Europe, but he made no attempt to convert the Western peoples away from Christianity to a cult of Ramakrishna. This wise policy is being followed by the centres he founded in the West. Thus the Christian mistake has been avoided. Conversion in the old fashioned sense was anyhow often shortlived and skin-deep and in many cases a disguised function of colonialism '.[5]

The Ramakrishna Math and Mission through their various centres and publications and above all through personal touch and inspiration are engaged in spreading this universal message, so much needed in the modern age. It is very difficult indeed to measure the scope and strength of a new spiritual force. We are much too near the source to appreciate and evaluate it. The full effect of that force will be known only when the movement has flowered and grown to its full size in the course of the centuries.

It is our proud privilege to live at a time, when the message is fresh and can be had from the direct disciples of the Master, or from those who have been near and dear to them. Let us open our hearts and minds, to this great spiritual awakening. Let us draw deep this eternal wisdom and be blessed by it.

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[5] Foreword to the History of the Ramakrishna Mission.

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Swami Vivekananda's power lay, perhaps, in the courage he gave others. He did not ever seem to be conscious of himself at all. It was the other man who interested him. 'When the book of life begins to open, then the fun begins,' he would say. He used to make us realize there was nothing secular in life; it was all holy. 'Always remember, you are incidentally an American, and a woman, but always a child of God. Tell yourself day and night who you are. Never forget it.' That is what he used to tell us. His presence, you see, was dynamic. You cannot pass that power on unless you have it, just as you cannot give money away unless you have it.... While he was lecturing, he was always completely absorbed in what he was talking about.

— JOSEPHINE MACLEOD

CONTRIBUTION OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA TO HINDU PHILOSOPHY

M. P. PANDIT

[Sri M. P. Pandit from Sri Aurobindo Ashrama, Pondicherry is well-known to our readers, both from his occasional contributions as also from the reviews of books, as a linguist and scholar. In his learned article he delineates in a short compass what Swamiji has done to revitalize Hindu thought. — *Ed.*]

What Vivekananda gave to Hindu Philosophy was much more than a contribution. He revived it and gave it a new lease of life. For, even before decay had set in the general life of the country, her spiritual tradition of which religion and philosophy are the twin wings, had ceased to be a living force. The springs of philosophy had dried up and all that was of value in the old heritage had been covered with an overgrowth of scholastic verbiage. Philosophy had become a subject for specialists to study and expound like other sciences of medicine, astrology, astronomy, etc. It was no more a live factor in the general life of the people as it had been in the hey-day of Indian civilization. To Vivekananda must go the credit for being the first in the present age to pull back the legacy from the attic, endow it with a new life and a new garb and make it a force for governing the lives of individuals and societies.

Vivekananda could do it because he himself embodied the best traditions of the Indian Quest for the Spirit and the Philosophy which expressed it in terms of the intellect. The first feature of this tradition is its universalism. It does not claim any monopoly over Truth. It admits a thousand roads to the Capitol of Brahman and is always eager to enrich itself with the gains of journeyings on other and newer paths. Vivekananda voiced this urge most emphatically, and following the example of his great Master, he approached the truths of all Faiths with a becoming humility: 'I accept all religions that were in the past and worship them all. I worship God with every one of them, in whatever form they worship Him. I shall go to the Mosque of a Mohammedan. I shall enter the Christian Church and kneel before the Crucifix. I shall enter the Buddhist temple and there I shall take refuge in the Buddha and his Law. I shall go into the forest and sit down in meditation trying to see the light which enlightens the heart of every one.'

Secondly, he believed to the letter the declaration of the Vedanta that All is Brahman. He saw God in the lowly as much as in the high, and dedicated himself — and called upon others — to the service of God in each creature. In order that the perception of the Divine in all shall not remain only as a mental knowledge, he gave a method whereby all the faculties, the senses of man, could be trained to seek and serve the Divine in every one. In declaring that 'We are servants of that God who by the ignorant is called man. There is but one basis of well-being, social, political or spiritual — to know that I and my brother are one. This is true for all countries and all people', he laid the basis for a unique synthesis of the way of Knowledge, of Works and of Devotion. Not that social service was something new in Indian society. The newness lay in the turn given by Vivekananda in the change of motif. Work for the fellowmen in need, not as a debt to be paid to the collective society from whom one derives a many-sided help, not even as a deposit in the bank of Karma on the credit side for future encashment, but as a labour of love to Him who dwells in the suffering humanity. So done, it is at once a step in the enlargement of the narrow boundaries of one's consciousness and a consecration of energies in dedication to the Lord whose presence is increasingly felt and realized in the All.

He set the goal of the Vedanta before every one. But he brought to bear another Way to arrive at it. He laid stress on Shakti, the Divine Puissance at work in the Universe and called upon each individual to awake to its presence in himself, give shape to its articulations and build up the Power, first for realization of the Divine and then for execution of Its Purpose.

And he kept alive in himself the Vedic Agni always aflame for wider and newer realms in the Infinitude of God. To him Knowledge was not a closed book. It was a growing and expanding Power leading the progression of mankind. He said : 'The Bible, the Vedas, the Koran, and all other sacred books are so many pages, and an infinite number of pages remain yet to be unfolded. I would leave my heart open for all of them.' He thus summed up in his own person the best in the spiritual tradition of the past and linked it with the dawning future of immense possibilities. His work in this field did not come to a close with the termination of his earthly career. It continues. It continues overtly and covertly, helping humanity to advance in the still unexplored expanses of the Divine Spirit.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND CERTAIN TENETS OF HINDU PHILOSOPHY

P. K. SUNDARAM

[Dr. P. K. Sundaram, M.A., Ph.D., Lecturer in Philosophy, University of Madras, brings forth in this exquisite paper how Swamiji reinterpreted and restated the meaning of some theories and tenets so essential to Hinduism. — *Ed.*]

I

The Swami made certain tenets basic to Hinduism fluid again. By his powerful and inspired thought, the dead watchwords undiscerningly uttered and popularized, began to disclose live *energy* within them. The theories of *Karma* and *Māyā*, the first in religion and the other in philosophy, had lost all their original significance and were so contorted and outworn through misuse that both degenerated into a view of deadening fatalism and intellectual torpor and obscurantism. It was the singular credit of the Swami to have enlivened these concepts and unfolded the stupendous world-view that they contained ; a view that was the very opposite of fatalism and torpor. After the days of the Great Ācāryas, who established the Vedānta, it was the Swami who travelled the entire expanse of India as a *Parivrājaka*. And at the southern most tip of India, the vision of the secret of the strength of this ancient land, which can hold its own anywhere in the world, naturally unfolded itself to him. Hinduism was thus to the Swami no abstract theory, but a live religion. It was in the very veins of the people in India, as it were. He could see the dormant soul of India face to face.

But the Swami in these travels saw the heavy and thick incrustations that had overlaid dangerously the vital arteries of Hindu religion. He saw, not merely that the masses suffered incurably from crushing poverty and blinding illiteracy, but, as a result, they were on the point of losing their very individuality, their soul. This spiritual malady was fundamental and could never be remedied superficially by social reforms which touch only the fringes of the problem by reorienting certain customs and beliefs. The Swami wrote in sarcasm and with deep concern in a letter to Sri Haridas Vihari Das Desai from Chicago : 'Educate and raise the masses; thus alone is a nation possible. Our reformers do not see where the wound is; they want to save the nation by marrying the widows. Do you think that a nation is saved by the number of husbands its widows get?' Not that the Swami wanted the widows to suffer; but that was not enough to root out the entire disease in the body-politic.

The problem was more fundamental and radical and so should the solution be. About educating the masses of people the Swami was insistent. He wrote to the Maharaja of Mysore on 23rd June 1894: 'The only service to be done for the lower classes is to give them education, to develop their lost individuality . . . give them ideas, and the rest will follow.' Education, according to the Swami, is the manifestation of the perfection already in man, as religion is the manifestation of the divinity already in man. Only the lion is to be awakened.

While the Swami stirred the people to purposeful action, he was not slow to remind them again and again that this regenerate dynamism to be effective should be rooted in the rockbed of renunciation and detachment. It was not the fury of the merest impulse to action that he advocated. Sovereign peace should be established first in the heart and from that centre should issue forth meaningful action. 'The motive power of the whole Universe,' said the Swami, 'is unselfishness, renunciation and love.' Again: 'Renunciation is the very basis of ethics. It says, "*not I, but thou*".'

Not reform of society, but reform of one's own self was the need of the hour. India wanted men who had character, a life, a centre. It wanted God-men to lead the way. Realization of the divinity in oneself was the first step to be taken. This was the special responsibility of the intellectuals, though, of course, for those who could not even read and write, whose lot was worse than that of beasts, the first thing to be done was education and nutrition. Starving bellies should come first in the order of priority if higher virtues are to be followed. When the Swami demanded that the ignorant were to be educated, he meant it in two senses. The first was the usual one, that the illiterate masses should be taught the three R's. The second ignorance that he had in mind was the ignorance of our own divinity. He said: 'The real evil is ignorance; to dispel ignorance the light of truth should be brought in. One's real nature, the light self-effulgent and ever pure, should be remembered and manifested.' This ignorance is shared by both the illiterate and the intellectual. The Swami said that the Advaitic prayer is: 'Rise, Thou Effulgent one! Rise, Thou who art always pure! Rise, Thou Birthless and Deathless one! Rise, Almighty One! and manifest Thy true nature. These little manifestations do not befit Thee.'

The very interpretations that the Swami gave of the central concepts of Hinduism like the theory of *Karma* and of *Māyā* were intended to vitalize a nation which had for long centuries buried itself in national inactivity and hopelessness.

II

The Swami expounded the theory of *Karma* and rebirth in a very forceful way calculated to show that this theory was the very antithesis of fatalism. No other theory than that of Karma could offer a satisfactory hypothesis to explain the inscrutable diversity of talents and status of man and animals. The innate capacity to acquire knowledge, for instance, is so widely varied among men that one cannot but conclude that each one of us comes into this life, not with a *tabula rasa*, but with a latent fund of knowledge or impressions. New experiences are to be assimilated to the old if knowledge is to arise. The Swami called these the *pigeon-holes* into which the new experiences are assorted and accommodated in order to become knowledge. Otherwise, the new will always remain unintelligible and anarchic. Knowledge can come only through experience. Hence it is that the latent fund of knowledge with which one is born should have been the result of experiences in an earlier birth and is

1963

being carried over into the present birth. Even the so-called instincts are only crystallization of what were once voluntary actions. This crystallization does not accrue to the body but only to the soul since the body perishes at death.

Nor can it be said that one's present birth is wholly conditioned by and transmitted from the parents by laws of heredity. There is a hereditary transmission so far as the instrument of the body is concerned. But it is for the soul's experience that the body is manufactured. Again, how can the physical germ contain the mental experience ? If in the bioplasmic cell the infinite amount of impressions from time immemorial through an unbroken line of parents and offsprings have entered, where and how can they exist there ? If the infinite number of impressions have without addition or subtraction been there and been responsible for the mental and physical characteristics of the offspring at every stage, all the offsprings should have been alike. If there has been mutation at any stage, how did this enter into the germ-cells ? The very assumption, that mental experience can be recorded in matter, according to the Swami, is most astonishing and is without proof.

Again, another merit of the theory of reincarnation according to the Swami is that only on that supposition the freedom of the souls could be reasonably maintained. As we sow, so we reap. If the present is the result of past deeds by the same token of reasoning the future will be decided by our *karma* now. We are the authors of the present ; so shall we be of the future also. Man fulfils his own destiny. When we ostensibly fail in our strivings, we throw the blame on fate, Providence etc. Seldom do we realize the insufficiencies in ourselves.

The Swami believed that evolution and involution imply each other. Therefore, the souls in transmigration go up and down in the scale of life, now as animal, now as man and now again as a worm. When the cycle of birth and death is complete, the soul returns to peace. The Swami held that freedom from the cycle of transmigration is bound to come to one and all sooner or later.

Of course, the Swami affirmed that the question of transmigration arises only in the apparent *Jīvahood* which is a conditioned existence of the Self. Freedom and immortality can have meaning only when the soul gets beyond the pale of causation. Since Self is pure, free and eternal, its being in bondage is only adventitious to it. What is more, its notion of limitedness by time and change cannot have a basis in reality. For one's nature can never be lost. So, the *Jīva-hood* is only apparent. The truth is *ajāti*, or non-origination, says the Swami.

The objection to the theory of re-birth, that it is inexplicable on this theory how one does not remember one's previous birth, is considered by the Swami. If existence depended upon the memory of it, we would have to say that we did not exist as babies, for no one remembers his babyhood.

The theory of *Karma* is transformed in the hands of the Swami into a clarion-call to the port of freedom on two counts : (1) The element of freedom is, however paradoxical, inherent in the theory of rebirth and *karma*, and (2) the very notion of being born is illusory, the self being eternally free. One can choose either of them, and realize his freedom. For those who want freedom of initiative in action, the first is enough ; for those who will not rest short of eternity, the second is to be necessarily known.

III

The Concept of Māyā

Of this important concept of *Māyā* in the Advaita philosophy, one finds one of the clearest analysis in the Swami's writings and speeches. His view of the world and of our life in it, is at once apparent when one goes through this analysis. The very finitude and limitation that we find ourselves in, when our true nature is eternal freedom, bespeaks *Māyā*. This is one meaning of the term *Māyā*. Again the lure of the finite is *Māyā*. It is the perpetual 'Tantalus' Hell'. While we have the glimpse of the truth, yet, we are, almost against our will, swayed in the opposite direction. Knowing fully well the futility of temporal ends of life, we vigorously pursue these ends. And this is *Māyā*. The world seems to be so substantial and real that all questions with reference to it, seem to be unnecessary dust raised by the woolly metaphysicians. But once an analysis is started in the nature of things in the world, perplexities crop up. No single ultimate question can be answered. Whether it is the beginning of the world, time and change, cause and effect, problem of knowledge, the presence of evil etc., we are none the better for asking them. The world of *Māyā* is likely to remain always a puzzle to mind, for the very mind is *Māyā*. Again though the world is ultimately not real, yet it appears. And this is *Māyā*. The world is, again, indeterminable as either real or unreal. It is not real because the Self alone is real. It is not totally unreal because it appears. The Swami calls it a 'mysterious twilight' of appearance.

However puzzling the world of *Māyā* is, yet, it can be transcended. Though we cannot explain the world by our canons of reason, yet we can put an end to our being deluded by its lures, just as illusions are got over by knowledge.

IV

The Vedas

The Swami frequently spoke about the Vedas and worship of images which are part and parcel of Hindu religious practice and subscribed to the view that the Vedas are eternal. He was not apologetic about any aspect of Hinduism. The laws, physical, mental and spiritual, have neither beginning, nor end, and so eternally are there. In other words the truths that the Vedas embodied are eternal. The Ṛṣis to whom the truths were revealed were seers and they discovered the truth that was already there. Truth is not created; it is always found. The Vedas are not mere books. The Swami said: They mean the accumulated treasure of spiritual laws discovered by different persons at different times. The Vedas declare that one is not the body, but the spirit. The Vedic sage proclaims: 'Hear, ye children of immortal-bliss! even ye that reside in higher spheres! I have found the Ancient One, who is beyond all darkness, all delusion. By knowing *Him* alone, will you be saved from death over again'.

V

Idolatry

To the charge that Hindus are misguided worshippers of idols, the Swami makes a trenchant reply. There is no polytheism, nor henotheism for that matter, in India. In every temple all the attributes are applied to each God. The principle is: 'theories are not explanations; a rose by any other name, would smell as sweet'. The Hindu knows that it is not the idol that is omnipresent God. He knows also that the image helps to fix his mind on the symbol, hold it there, and transcend, for however fleeting a moment, the limitations of the image into that presence which the image is deliberately designed to symbolize. Image-worship is not an error. To the Hindu, says the Swami, man is not travelling so much from error to truth as from truth to truth, from the lower to the higher. Even the crudest belief is not unmixed with truth. It is because the Hindu thinks that the immeasurable Reality cannot be grasped by the feeble mind of man except through signs and symbols — and, be it noted, these symbol-worships are not obligatory in Hinduism — that the Hindu takes naturally and easily, as fish takes to water, all the contrarieties of religious worship, that have found their home in India, as only so many complementaries. Religion in its essence is found everywhere. It is not the exclusive possession of a few.

This attitude issues forth in the concept of universal religion on which the Swami spoke so much. I may quote him in full:

> 'If there is ever to be a universal religion, it must be one which will have no location in place

or time, which will be infinite, like the God it will preach; and whose sun will shine upon the followers of Krishna and of Christ, on saints and sinners alike; which will not be Brahmanical or Buddhist, Christian or Mohommedan; but the sum-total of these, and still have infinite space for development; which in its catholicity will embrace in its infinite arms and find a place for, every human being.'

The Swami himself expressed his objective in one of his letters to a disciple in February 17, 1896:

> 'To put the Hindu ideas into English and then make out of dry philosophy and intricate mythology and queer startling psychology, a religion which shall be easy, simple, popular and at the same time meet the requirements of the highest minds, is a task which only those can understand who have attempted it. The abstract Advaita must become living — poetic — in everyday life; and out of bewildering yogism must come the most scientific and practical psychology — and all these must be put into such a form that a child may grasp it. This is my life's work. The Lord only knows how far I shall succeed. To work we have the right, not to the fruits thereof.'

VI

That the Swami has, in a way as no one else could have, achieved what he attempted to achieve, viz., a revival of the ancient spirit of Hinduism and a reawakened faith in the soundness of its philosophy and religion, the posterity, to whom he bequeathed the fruits of his labour, knows and acknowledges with deep gratitude in this Swamiji's centenary year of 1963.

CONTRIBUTION OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA TO HINDU PHILOSOPHY

ANTHONY ELENJIMITTAM

[Sri Anthony Elenjimittam is Editor, *Basic Education,* a journal devoted to religion and education, published from Bombay. He is also conducting a school at Bombay and has been contributing articles to *Vedanta Kesari,* sometimes under pen-names also. In this article he presents beautifully Swamiji's contribution to Indian culture in general and Hindu Philosophy in particular. — *Ed.*]

Vivekananda is not a name; it is a world; a new dynamic force; an encyclopedia of the twentieth century religious philosophy and culture; a dream, a vision of the Universal Humanity at its divine heights and psychic best; an urge, an inspiration for young and old of the East and the West; a prophet, a pioneer broadcasting station of the universalist gospel of bridging the East and the West, India and the World, man and God, through the Vedantic vision of the seers and Rishis of yore, so incisively and uniquely experienced and expressed through his immortal words and deeds.

India, like pre-Christian Greece, is the richest treasure-house of religious and philosophical experiments and experiences. Freedom from any authoritarian imposition and the birth-right of each individual to search for and find out his own way to spiritual perfection is zealously guarded by our representative seers and prophets. Within the broad-based Hindu skies even an atheist, an agnostic, a *charvaka,* the Buddhists or Jains have the same honoured place as a rigidly orthodox Vedantin or ceremoniously rigorous caste-ridden Brahmin. If modern Europe had even twenty per cent of the tolerant attitude of Indian Rishis and sages, the century-old tensions and antagonisms between the Catholics and Protestants, the Christians and the Jews could have been solved long ago.

The most impregnable fort and the unique contribution of India to the world market of cultures in the history of civilization is evidently in the realm of philosophical religion, or better, religious philosophy. Whatever be the wall built by Western theologians between philosophy and religion, in India there exists no steel wall whatsoever between Religion and Philosophy, both being but the two sides of the same medal, two aspects of the same vision of Reality.

Religion, almost everywhere is pure gold mixed up with lead, all charity and compassion mixed up with cruelty and bloodshed, all rationalistic intuition diluted with most stupid superstitions. That is the reason, the wisest among men turned their minds to philosophy, which means practical wisdom of life gained through reason, intuition and mystical experience. In the West, philosophy means literally, *philos-sophia* — lover or love of wisdom. Chief among the European Scholastics define philosophy as 'knowledge of man, God and universe through their ultimate causes'. In India, however, philosophy means *darshan* — vision of Reality transcending appearances, apprehension of the Infinite in and through the finite, realization of the true Self in man. The chief difference, then, in the concept of philosophy of the East and the West consists in this that, whereas in European history philosophy means knowledge of things through the ultimate cause or causes, in India philosophy means realization of Self through redemptive gnosis or *Jñāna*. In fact, the concept of *Jñāna* or *Vidyā* in the Upaniṣads, and the Yoga is very much akin to the *beatific vision* of the Christian theologians and thinkers, the *gnosis* of the Greek philosophers, the *Nirvaṇa* of the Buddhists and the *summum bonum* of various other historic religions.

In India there is no borderland between philosophy and religion because both tend to the one goal, viz. Self-realization, philosophy for the intellectuals, while religion for the masses who are to be led through faith and authority to the land of vision and realization. By their very nature philosophers are iconoclasts, as the religious are idol and image worshippers, anthropomorphists and ritualists. It is when there is a harmonious blend between *darshan* or philosophy and *Dharma* or religion in the same individual that we come across towering personalities who stand at Everest summits in the realms of religion and philosophy. That was Shankara and Ramanuja; that was Augustine and Aquinas; that was Ramakrishna and Vivekananda in our own age. Ramakrishna was the seer, whose missionary apostle and dynamic propagandist was Swami Vivekananda.

In Swami Vivekananda Indian philosophy found its twentieth century fulfilment. In him everything is positive, a supreme yes. It is not as much the *neti, neti* aspect of Brahman, but the *iti-iti* aspect of Reality that expressed itself through Vivekananda. The old slur, that Indian religions like Hinduism and Buddhism are world-denying in their essence, does not hold good any more with Swami Vivekananda, with whom religion literally means 'manifestation of Divinity already in man', but a divinity which wakes up the lion in us and strengthens us to face the problems of life courageously and solve them effectively.

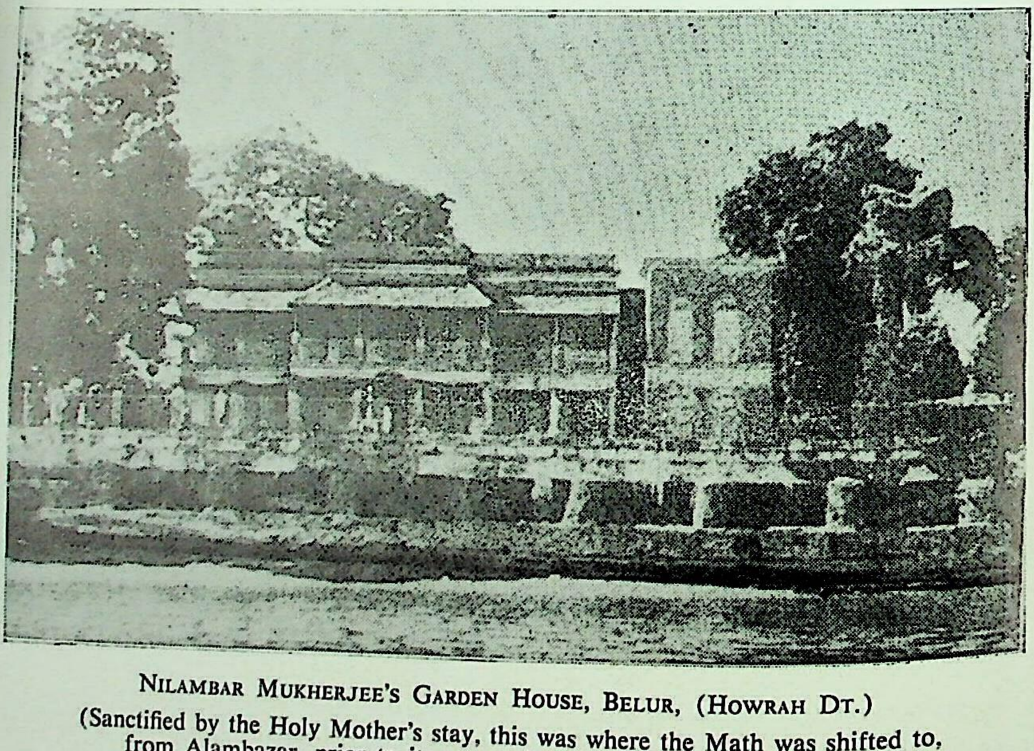
Our Vedic and Upaniṣadic philosophers compared the absorption of *Jivātma* in *Paramātma*, the goal of religion; to a dewdrop melting in the shining sea of Brahman. But Swamiji speaks of 'arousing the lion of divinity' as the goal of religion and making this awakened religion to forge ahead in solving the pressing economic, social, educational and cultural problems of India. This reinterpretation of the life-accepting aspect of the religious philosophy of India by Swami Vivekananda is a distinct contribution to modern philosophy.

In many countries of the world, more specially in Europe in the middle ages, there existed a tendency to accept everything if only blessed by the sanctimonious name of religion. It is then that religious philosophers resorted almost exclusively to the introspective method of subjective experiences to interpret man, cosmos and the phenomena of the objective universe. That was due to no fault of theirs. Neither Shankara, nor Ramanuja, Madhvacharya nor Chaitanya had the accumulated evidence of modern science at their disposal

{TRIVANDRUM 1892)

VIVEKANANDA ROCK AT KANYAKUMARI

(From where Swamiji looked at India and pondered over her problems, and where he was vouchsafed the vision of his future work.)



NILAMBAR MUKHERJEE'S GARDEN HOUSE, BELUR, (HOWRAH DT.)

(Sanctified by the Holy Mother's stay, this was where the Math was shifted to, from Alambazar, prior to its removal to its own premises in 1898.)

to integrate their subjective experiences with the facts and data of the scientific world. But twentieth century Vivekananda was educated in the Western critical and scientific spirit with pure springs of rationalism and humanism gushing forth from his keen and sharp intellect. This led Narendranath Dutta to agnosticism, scepticism. It was with these weapons of modern scientific training and Western influence that the young seeker approached the sage of Dakshineswar, the God-realized and spirit-intoxicated saint of universal harmony of religions.

The Vedas were books, while Ramakrishna was realization. It is in communion with this Realization Embodied that Swami Vivekananda found his equilibrium and integration between empirical sciences and Self-realization. It was reserved for the great Swamiji to teach that Religion needed correction in the light of Science as much as Science needed correction in the light of Religion. Actually Swami Vivekananda was himself an embodiment of both the religious esoteric of philosophy on the one side, and the modern scientific culture on the other. It is in this sense that Swamiji's teachings, his lectures and writings, his great ideals and words of power stand out as a kind of bridge between Science and Religion, between Eastern mysticism and Western practicality.

With these as premises, we may specify some of the most outstanding contributions of Swami Vivekananda to modern Hindu philosophy and culture.

1. The first and foremost contribution of Swami Vivekananda to Indian thought and philosophy is the universalization of Vedanta and the broad-based Hindu culture which made the doctrine and teaching of the Swamiji transcend the limits of India or even Asia, and embrace the entire mankind. Hindu philosophy is no more a racial and national heritage; it is the common patrimony of mankind. The Swami universalized the very concept of Vedas when he said :

> 'By the Vedas no books are meant. They mean the accumulated treasury of spiritual laws discovered by different persons in different times. Just as the law of gravitation existed before its discovery, and would still exist if all humanity forgot it, so is it with the laws that govern the spiritual world. The moral, ethical and spiritual relations between soul and soul and between individual spirits and the Father of all spirits, were there before their discovery, and would remain even if we forgot them'.
>
> —*Address at the Parliament of Religions.*

This universalization and sky-high catholicity made the Swami say that he would kneel with the Christians in a Christian Church, squat with Hindus in a temple, and bow down in a Mosque with Moslems. The very same universalization made the Swami accept all *scriptures* and all *religions as true*. To his religio-philosophical genius there is no journey of man from error to truth, but from lower truth to higher truth. Error is something negative which is repulsive to him.

2. From the Vedantic catholicity as the Swamiji conceived it and Sri Ramakrishna realized it, there took place a kind of wedding between the philosophic iconoclastic *nirākāra* Brahman with the popular religious traditions stored up in the rituals, idols, dogmas and creeds. Religions at their lower levels have a place for the masses who are incapable of arriving at the heights of divinity potentially inlaid in each man. They are to be led by hand, as it were from temples, idols, rituals and ceremonies to the gnostic heights which terminate in the knowledge and realization of the Absolute. Says the great Swami :

> 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divine within, by controlling nature, external and internal.
>
> 'Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control or philosophy, by one or more, or all of these — and be free.
>
> 'This is the whole of religion. Doctrines, or dogmas, or rituals or books or temples or forms are but secondary details'.
>
> —*Raja Yoga.*

3. The restoration of Indian philosophy to its pristine *Advaitic* purity, and harmonizing Bādarāyaṇa's and Śankara's non-dualistic,

idealistic, monism with the progress of modern science on the one side and the essential tenets of other religions. These are all specific contributions of Swami Vivekananda to Indian culture of the twentieth century. Similarly, in the field of education, monasticism and national service, the well-known powerful phrases of the Swamiji are all reminiscent of the Upaniṣadic wisdom.

About the real education, in tune with yogic psychology, he said :

> 'To me the very essence of education is concentration of mind, not the collecting of facts. If I had to do my education over again, and had any voice in the matter, I would not study facts at all. I would develop the power of concentration and detachment, and with a perfect instrument I could collect facts at will.... Side by side in the child, should be developed the power of concentration and detachment'.
>
> —*Lectures and Discourses.*

These words of religious and philosophic urge surged forth from the depths of a soul which gave primary importance to spiritual values and character. Our routine educationists and government departments, who know no better system of education than forcing the children to cram up certain books and notes and then secure a diploma with a view to obtaining a lucrative job, need seriously revise and reform their methods in the light of Swamiji's teachings.

Each nation, said Vivekananda, has its own genius and mission in the world. India's genius is always in the realm of philosophy and religion which from time immemorial, of the Vedic Rishis to our day, has been kept intact through an unbroken chain of savants, saints and seers. Among such representative men of thought and action, the contribution of Swami Vivekananda is unique whether we turn to pure Vedantic philosophy, Yoga psychology, Indian Social Sciences or even the economic and socio-political revolution which the Swami envisaged.

In the galaxy of modern eminent Indians, the unique role held by Swami Vivekananda consists in this that he built up a synthesis of Indian philosophy with the world culture today ; that he pointed out its practical applications to mental health and hygiene, to the much-needed social reforms and economico-political justice to the underdogs, the down-trodden and the have-nots, whom he called his God. The picture of a youthful awakened India, purged of all follies and accumulated accretions which dimmed or killed the vital spark of the Upaniṣadic wisdom, was ever before his eyes. The plight of an over-whelming majority of Indians suffering under the dead weight of socio-economic injustice burned his heart and made the great Swami roll in tears and breathe with bleeding lungs for months and years. It is not an arm-chair philosophy preached in college lecture halls that appealed to him, but a philosophy that brought bread to the hungry and raised the very picture of India up to the skies. That was Vivekananda. That was his mission and vocation ; that was his contribution to twentieth century Indian culture.

Real existence, real knowledge, and real love are eternally connected with one another, the three in one : where one of them is, the others also must be ; they are the three aspects of the One without a second—the Existence-Knowledge-Bliss. When that existence becomes relative, we see it as the world ; that knowledge becomes in its turn modified into the knowledge of the things of the world ; and that bliss forms the foundation of all true love known to the heart of man. Therefore true love can never react so as to cause pain either to the lover or to the beloved. . . . With love there is no painful reaction ; love only brings a reaction of bliss ; if it does not, it is not love ; it is mistaking something else for love.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

VIVEKANANDA'S CONTRIBUTION TO HINDUISM

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI

[Sri S. Rajagopala Sastri, M.A., Professor of Philosophy, Vivekananda College, Madras, has in this scholarly exposition presented the immensity of Swamiji's contribution to Hinduism in a most lucid manner. — *Ed.*]

In the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* it is said that the Lord created the senses turning them outward. This explains why man is always, as a rule, uninterested in religious and spiritual matters. It is a realization of the sense of values, moral and spiritual that distinguishes man from animals. But we may say that the feeling, however nebulous, of the existence of God or a Superior Being, is almost instinctive in the human mind, and all religions, ancient and modern have emphasized this fact, as also the necessity for the cultivation of this feeling.

It is the peculiar prerogative of Hinduism that unlike religions like Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism etc., it has no historical founder. But every religion has inevitably institutionalized and organized as a result of the impact of social forces. Personal religion is always superior and dynamic when contrasted with institutional religion and though one is inextricably intertwined with the other, the purity and soundness of religion can be had only in the sources. But at the same time we have to see that the tenets, which may not always be consistent with one another, are always liable to different interpretations. We may illustrate this aspect of religion by taking Hinduism. The Śruti, i.e., the Vedas, including the Brāhmaṇas and the Upaniṣads, together with the Bhagavad Gītā, constitutes the source of our religion. The age of interpretation came earlier than even Śankarācārya, when different Ācāryas interpreted and systematized the fundamentals in their own way and thus gave rise to different schools of thought which gradually became sectional, narrow and dogmatic.

Taking Vedanta philosophy as an example, we may easily see that though it arose on the basis of the various Upaniṣads, as a result of differences in interpretation, we have several schools of Vedanta like the Advaita, the Viśiṣṭādvaita, the Dvaita, the Suddhādvaita, Dvaitādvaita, Bhedābheda and so on, each differing from the other. But from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries came a process of synthesis, when thoughtful leaders began to emphasize the essentials and argued that like a string running through the various beads, the fundamental characteristics of religion were the same in all the systems of Hinduism. Secondly, the knowledge of religious practices, beliefs and doctrines gradually began to find their way out of India, thanks to the labours of enlightened souls. The greatest work in this direction was by Swami Vivekananda, whose lectures expounding Hinduism throughout the length and breadth of America worked a miracle, as it were, in enabling educated Americans understand our religion. Swamiji's lectures had the force of a tornado in their intensity. The incredulous audience were galvanized by the resplendence and glory of Hinduism. 'Hinduism invades America' was the most appropriate title given to this phenomenon by contemporary Americans who found to their surprise that Hinduism was like an 'expanding universe', with almost innumerable facets and that it was second to none in the lofty idealism of its doctrines and in its profundity and depth of comprehension. Vivekananda's greatest work was his preaching the gospel of Hinduism to Americans and making them realize the loftiness of the spirituality of India, irrespective of her then material degradation. Swamiji felt that India had a message to deliver to the world so far as spirit was concerned. There was no aspect of religion he did not touch and like the Advaitin, that he was, he was faithful to the Śruti in his exposition. His masterly eloquence, the simplicity of his language, the profound mastery which he exhibited in his presentation, his essential humility and the sparkle of wit in answering questions — all these made a profound impression in the land of the Parliament of Religions.

A notable feature is the interpretation or the re-interpretation of the tenets of Hinduism by Vivekananda. The general position that he takes up in his exposition is that of Advaita Vedanta, but he looks at the problems of religion from a broader point of view. As he himself says in a lecture delivered in London,

> 'Religion must be studied on a broader basis than formerly... All sectarian ideas and tribal and national ideas of religion must be given up... All that was good in the past must be preserved and the doors must be kept open for future additions to the already existing store. Religions also must be inclusive and not look down with contempt upon one another because their particular ideals of God are different.'

His appreciation of Advaita itself is due to the fact that it agrees with and even goes a little farther than modern researches, both on physical and moral lines. Again the Advaita system, from the very start, has been non-destructive. 'Do not disturb the faith of any... but help every one to get higher and higher; include all humanity.' Vivekananda was of the firm view that all religions are merely different forces in the economy of God, working for the good of mankind and that

> 'through high philosophy or low, through the most exalted mythology or the grossest, through the most refined ritualism or arrant fetishism, every sect, every soul, every nation, consciously or unconsciously is struggling upward toward God.'

Hence no religion is false. On the contrary it is only less real. As he puts it, we do not go from the unreal to the real or from error to truth but only from the less real to the more real. This line of teaching has made Vivekananda the protagonist of a world religion, a universal religion, neither national nor sectarian and this advocacy of the validity of all religions is on a par with that universal outlook taught in the Bhagavad Gītā.

Swamiji did not mince words when he spoke on Godhead. To a startled and bewildered world he preached the great Advaitic truth that each one of us is divine, that religion is the realization of this divinity that is potentially in us and that the methods of realization are work, knowledge, faith, devotion and concentration. His motto appended to his exposition of Raja Yoga is a masterly summary of what religion is and expresses in an inimitable manner what Hinduism is.

To appreciate his contribution to our religion it is necessary at this stage to find out in greater detail what exactly the Swami preached regarding Hinduism. As we have seen, he always maintained that man is divine and that in the last analysis he is really Brahman, of whom the Upaniṣads speak with one voice as *sat, cit, ananta, ānanda* — the *Bhūma.* Very often he does not distinguish the Impersonal Absolute from the personal but merely designates both as God so far as general teaching is concerned. It is true that there is no cut and dried distinction between the two. The *Impersonal* and *Nirguṇa* is not superior to or different from the personal and *Saguṇa*. The latter is only an aspect of the former and hence each is non-different from the other. It is probably not right to interpret Śankara's teachings in this connection that he regarded Īśwara or Saguṇa Brahman as ultimately unreal. The latter is Brahman associated with Māyā. While he does not say that the views of the Viśiṣṭādvaitins or Dvaitins regarding the nature of the Absolute are wrong, he describes them as partial and incomplete, and lower in the scale of evolution of the God concept. Brahman is one, without *sajātiya, vijātiya* and *svagatabheda,* — one indivisible, partless, pure existence, conscious-

1963

ness and bliss. He thus taught Monistic Vedanta and not mono-theistic Vedanta. Hence the world is not a part of God nor is God a blend of both *cit* and *acit*. It is not a creation of a personal God but is only a manifestation of God and hence is unreal from the pāramārtha point of view. Māyā not only prevents us from seeing Brahman as one (āvaraṇa) but also wrongly distorts this Brahman into a multiplicity, which is merely the world of nāma-rūpa. The question: what is Māyā, the Swami answers by a series of dazzling illustrations which have the effect of making us intuitively understand it, though we do not succeed in logically defining it. The ancient Hindu philosophers use the concept of Māyā or nescience to explain how the Absolute became the relative; how the multiplicity of the world arose from the *one* Brahman; how the particular came from the universal. But the principle of Māyā is a mere statement of fact and does not explain the phenomenal world. We do not know the 'how' or the 'why' of it. Māyā is nothing more than the contradictions which are inherent in our knowledge, experience and feelings. The principle of Māyā is pivotal to Advaita and problems like the creation or manifestation of the world, the relation between Jīva and Ātman, the necessity for realization are all explainable only on this basis. *'Atma ca Brahma'*, is what the Śruti teaches and this implies that the Jīva or the individual soul is the same as Brahman. In several of his lectures the Swami has very clearly discussed the nature of this Ātman. It has neither form nor shape and hence is omnipresent. The categories of time, space and causation are only in the mind and the Ātman, which is not mind, is beyond these three categories. This leads us to conclude that it is infinite. Anything that is infinite can be only *one*, for the concept of *two* infinite things is meaningless. The Ātman, therefore is only one, in spite of the multiplicity of bodies, minds etc. It is therefore non-different from God. 'The Real Man is therefore one and infinite, the omnipresent spirit.'

But then, how does the Ātman acquire limitations? Swamiji argues, consistent with Advaita metaphysics, that the limitations are only apparent for neither the body nor the mind is real. These are merely the state of flux like the columns of water in a river and hence are not real. The Self alone is one's nature. 'The infinite Self is the real name of man and he is struggling to express it in various ways.' This Self cannot be known by intellect, for all knowledge is objectification and the pure subject can never become an object.

Parallel to this line of inquiry is that of the creation of the world. The difficulties of postulating a personal God 'creating' the world are sufficiently well-known to philosophers. But the world is an undeniable factor and the question is how did this world come about. The Hegelian school argues that the Infinite is trying to express itself in the universe. But as Vivekananda pertinently asks, how can the finite express the Infinite unless It limits Itself? The Absolute can become this universe only by limitation and how does this limitation come about? In a lecture delivered in London, he answers this question by saying that the Absolute has become the universe by coming through time, space and causation. In the Absolute we have no time or space or causation for these categories are mental and there is no way of comprehending the Infinite except by the intellect and hence the apparent limitation. This descent, degeneracy or the phenomenalising of the Absolute is called Māyā in Hindu terminology. In the ultimate analysis, space, time and causation have no reality and so Māyā also has no reality, even as the waves of the ocean are really nothing more than the water in the ocean. The universe, therefore is only apparent, an appearance, true only for the time being, a *vivarta* of Brahman.

To the casual reader of Vivekananda, a doubt arises whether the Advaita Vedantin does not consciously or unconsciously keep separate the *vivarta* from the *pariṇāma*, the *nirguṇa*, *niravayava* Brahman from Brahman taken as a whole and consisting of parts, and whether the system is not vitiated by Māyāvāda which describes the world as an illusion. If the world is only an illusion, it is clearly non-existent and a non-existent thing cannot bind a really existent thing and then how does the question of mokṣa arise at all? If the Śruti text '*Sarvam khalvidam Brahma*' is true, the world also must be taken as real, for from the real we cannot have the unreal. The Ekātmavāda should lead us to look upon all as Brahman. Thus we come to the position that either the cosmos with all its sentient and insentient beings is *real*, as real as Brahman or it is entirely unreal, as the son of a barren woman. Śankara enunciated the doctrine of *sattātraya*, to get over this dilemma, and this principle enables us to take the world as relatively real in the sense that though it is not ultimately real, it is real so long as it lasts — like the rope appearing as snake and hence we have a duty to attain Mukti. From the Pāramārthika stage and only when it is reached, the empirical world is seen to be a mere illusion, a mirage. But Swamiji introduces the ideal of service, which does not find a place in Advaita, by combining the principle of the oneness of the Absolute with the Absolute with parts. 'All this, verily is Brahman', does not mean that Brahman alone is real and the rest is nought but that everything is Brahman, though in different forms and degrees. The lower aspect must be helped to realize the higher; and the lower and the higher are non-different from each other; and when one helps another, one is only helping oneself. European scholars are always of the view that the Hindu has no ethics and that his morality is merely conditioned by the codified injunctions of religion. Inspite of the denial by the West we should remember that the ideal of service to humanity is not new to India. Vivekananda gave a new emphasis to this concept and taught that when man is served, God Himself is served. In his lecture on the 'Necessity for Religion', he argues that renunciation of the individual ego and the senses is the very basis on which ethics stands. Perfect self-annihilation is the very ideal of ethics. Nor can utilitarian standards explain morality. Spirituality alone can be its basis. Thus when I serve another I serve my own self, the only motive being service to God.

In his lectures there was another aspect which he emphasized, viz., that Vedanta was an intensely practical religion which we can apply to every aspect of our life. Thus instead of regarding religion as merely an abstract concept unrelated to and isolated from the practical world, he taught that religion was thoroughly practical. In a series of four lectures delivered in London, he discusses practical Vedanta. The goal of Vedanta is the attainment of the secret of work — real activity: this is doing one's duty without a thought of reward (*phala*). The mind must be completely calm and well-balanced. The Vedantic ideal is that man is divine (*Tattvamasi*) and hence he is not a powerless miserable sinner. He does not grow from sin to perfection but only from the less perfect to the more perfect. Though the great Śankara emphasized only the *nivṛtti mārga* to attain liberation, Vivekananda teaches that this liberation, which consists in realizing our divinity, should be striven for in all states of life, and in all its conditions. The ultimate reality is one — one only.

> 'There is but one Life, one world, one Existence. Everything is that One. The differences are of degree and not of kind. The manifoldness of the world is like a dream. This one is the Absolute, impersonal Brahman. No form of worship of this Brahman is wrong or error, it may be less perfect.'

In his concluding lecture, he movingly says:

> 'Rise, Thou Effulgent One! Rise, Thou who art always pure. Rise. Thou Birthless and Deathless one! Rise. Almighty One! manifest thy true nature. These little manifestations do not befit thee.'

This is the highest prayer that Advaita teaches.

Looking as spectators at the work done by Swami Vivekananda, nearly 60 years later, we see the immense and colossal work which he did in the cause of Hinduism. Hinduism as practised by the people was loaded with a useless mass of conventions, creeds and superstitions, which were merely the accumulated accretions of centuries and it was very difficult to separate the chaff from the grain and discover the radiant gems of truth. The Vedas and the Upaniṣads, no doubt lay bare the principles but even here the great difficulty is to steer clear of the commentaries and interpretations which often clashed with each other and confused the philosopher, not to speak of the lay man. Which interpretation is rational, consistent and satisfies the mystic and religious experiences of the individual? The most abstruse and higher type of non-dualism, mysticism, monism, qualified monism, dualism, pluralism — all these are taught in the Śruti, in the sense that references to these are scattered throughout in the texts. The emphasis also varied depending on the method of approach. Metaphysical and emotional approaches (Jñāna and Bhakti) clashed, besides three strata, viz. knowledge, action and contemplation, are found in the Śruti. One's psychological experiences may not exactly agree with the metaphysical truths and temperamental differences of the seers of truth may give rise to different expositions. What is basical and what is merely accidental, thus becomes very difficult to ascertain. Vivekananda had other difficulties also. He had to translate the spirit of the message of Hinduism or Vedanta in an alien language, subject to inherent limitations in concepts and their connotation, and talk to an audience not over-receptive to his lectures though they were in simple and easily understandable language. The mythology of India and the 'queer' concepts of mokṣa, reincarnation, karma and identity of Atman and Brahman, had to be expressed and rationally justified to his audience. How well the Swami succeeded in all this is very well-known. Not only was his mission a great success, and what was more important, he succeeded in presenting a unified synthesis of Hinduism. This reconstruction has made religion a major force in the life of the nation. His blunt words had a bracing effect.

> 'Religion is not talk or doctrines or theories nor is it sectarianism. Religion cannot live in sects and societies. It is the relation between the soul and God. How can it be turned into a society? . . . Religion consists in realization.'

He claimed that he learned from his great Master that the religions of the world are not contradictory or antagonistic.

> 'They are but various phases of one eternal Religion. . . . One infinite religion has existed all through eternity and will ever exist and this Religion is expressing itself in various countries in various ways.'

From this view-point, his ascent to, what he calls, universal religion is significant. He argues that *prima facie*, there is no universality in religion seeing there is no similarity among countries in their mythology, philosophy and rituals. But he is convinced that there is a universal religion in existence even now. The universal religion runs through all the various religions of the world in the form of God. He is the thread that runs through each of the world-religions. In Him we are all one. But at the same time, since unity in diversity is the plan of the universe, there are differences in the manifestations of God. Vivekananda emphasizes that by a universal religion, he does not mean that there is to be one single ritual or philosophy or mythology for all of us. Variation is a natural necessity. At the same time religion must satisfy different types of temperaments. Thus Hinduism, of all the religions does justice to our several faculties like the cognitive, conative, affective and psychic. We have several pathways or *sādhanas* to realize the divinity within us like bhakti or piety, which satisfies the emotional type, Raja-yoga, which by controlling the senses and prāṇa helps to attain realization, the karma mārga or pathway of action, which specially appeals to the extrovert and finally the jñāna mārga or philosophy, which by knowledge and insight determines our liberation. The Swami, true to the Advaitic tradition, upholds jñāna mārga but he is not fanatic about it. In his talks, he says that the

> 'path of bhakti or devotion to the Lord is a slow process but is easy to practise... Only the path of jnana is of quick fruition and the rationale of all other creeds. But even in the path of discrimination there is the chance of the mind getting stuck in the interminable net of vain argumentations. Therefore along with this meditation should be practised.'

Hence the *sādhanas* are to be selected as suited to the temperament of the individual and there is no gainsaying the fact that each of the four is capable of carrying the votary to the promised liberation. Sri Ramakrishna reconciles all these four and says that there need be no quarrel at all between the various sects. *Jñāna karma samuccaya* is not meaningless as it is wrongly made out to be, in the hands of some of the votaries of Advaita.

It is not possible in the course of a short essay to enumerate exhaustively the contributions of Swamiji to Hinduism. The greatest contribution of his is, that he enabled the Hindu to stand erect and speak confidently about his hoary and splendid religion and culture. The attitude that Hinduism is insignificant when compared with other religions, he decisively routed and gave back our religion and culture to us even as Bhagīratha brought Ganga from celestial regions.

The life of every man is, in a manner, the life of the past. It comes to him through heredity, through surroundings, through education, through his own reincarnation — the past of the race. In a manner, the past of the earth, the past of the whole world is there, upon every soul. What are we, in the present, but a result, an effect, in the hands of that infinite past?

* * * *

We all know that God exists, and yet we do not see Him, we do not understand Him. Take one of these great Messengers of Light, compare his character with the highest ideal of God that you ever formed, and you will find that your God falls short of the ideal, and that the character of the Prophet exceeds your conceptions. If they are really, actually, higher than all our conceptions of God, what harm is there in worshipping them? Not only is there no harm, but it is the only possible and positive way of worship. However much you may try, by struggle, by abstraction, by whatsoever method you like, still so long as you are a man in the world of men, your world is human, your religion is human and your God is human. And that must be so.

* * * *

Two classes of men do not worship God as man — the human brute who has no religion, and the Paramahamsa (highest Yogi), who has gone beyond humanity, who has thrown off his mind and body, and gone beyond the limits of nature. All nature has become his Self. He has neither mind nor body, and can worship God as God, as can a Jesus or a Buddha. The other extreme is the human brute. You know how two extremes look alike. Similar is the case with the extreme of ignorance and the other extreme of knowledge; neither of these worships anybody. The extremely ignorant do not worship God, not being developed enough to feel the need for so doing. Those that have attained the highest knowledge also do not worship God — having realized and become one with God. God never worships God. Between these two poles of existence, if any one tells you he is not going to worship God as man, take care of him. He is an irresponsible talker, he is mistaken; his religion is for frothy thinkers, it is intellectual nonsense.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S MESSAGE OF UNIVERSALISM

P. SANKARANARAYANAN

[Prof. P. Sankaranarayanan, M.A., sometime Head of the Department of Philosophy, Vivekananda College, Madras, is presently Professor of Philosophy, the Bhavan's College, Bombay. Here in this paper he brings out the universality of Swamiji's message in an impressive manner. —*Ed.*]

Hospitable to all faiths and creeds, to all forms of life and manners of men, our country's special excellence lies in two features: a fullness of content and an inclusive wholeness. Accustomed to look on the entire mankind as one family, the genius of our country has ever been characterized by a universality which affirmed identities, denying that differences, where found, are not by any means ultimate. Reality is One, though it expresses itself variously suited to differences of the minds that try to comprehend it. The One, though expressed in the differences, includes them all in its bosom, permeates them and yet transcends them all. Of necessity, the universal has to be articulated in the alphabet of the particulars; but the universal, which is more than the particulars, cannot be exhausted by any of them. Nor is the universal an eclectic whole, a mere sum total of the particulars. There is more in the universal than is found in any particular or in all of them put together; and it is this *more* that gives strength and sustenance to the particulars, and invests them with their validity and value. Discordant as the particulars are in their separate being, as elements of the universal, they make for a harmony which the poets speak of as the music of the spheres and which the mystics feel in the ecstasy of their communion with the Supreme.

Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna illustrated in his life this essential spiritual Truth of the Universal enfolding the particulars in Itself, and by a reverse process, of the particulars unfolding the Universal. *Vyaṣṭi* and *Samaṣṭi* are complementary to each other. There cannot be a wood without the component trees, even as the trees which stand in exclusive isolation cannot make a wood. As the Incarnation of God, who is the all-embracing Universal, Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna embodied in himself every faith and creed, and proved by his practices and by his realizations the validity of every form of approach to the Supreme. For, every path that leads to God is not a path made by man, but has been carved out by God Himself inviting man to His Kingdom. They all stem from their common Universal. If men look down the road with their backs to the Universal, then they will see only differences which increase the distance among the paths; but, when once they turn their gaze to the Universal, the dividing distances will narrow down and ultimately disappear. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna invested this truth with the certificate of verification in the *sādhanas* that he adopted and the *siddhis* that he acquired. Swami Vivekananda, as an *antevāsin* of pre-eminent excellence to his Master, imbibed this Truth of Universalism in full measure.

Swamiji was a rationalist by instinct and a scientist by upbringing before he came under the influence of Sri Ramakrishna. He was a typical graduate of his time steeped in Mill and Spencer. Uncompromising as he was in his rationalism and scientific spirit, and probably for that very reason, he was an honest rationalist and scientist. Swamiji knew that 'the worship of the goddess of Reason during the French Revolution was not the first manifestation of that phenomenon in the history of humanity; it was a re-enactment of what had happened in ancient times; but in modern times it has assumed greater proportions.' He poses the question: 'Can religion justify itself by the discoveries of reason, through which every other science has justified itself?' Can the same methods of investigation which we apply to sciences and knowledge outside, be applied to what he significantly called 'the Science of Religion'? Swamiji answers: 'In my opinion this must be so, and I am also of opinion that the sooner it is done the better'. He proceeds:

> 'If a religion is destroyed by such investigation, it was all the time useless, unworthy superstition; and the sooner it goes the better. I am thoroughly convinced that its destruction will be the best thing that could happen. All that is dross will be taken off, no doubt: but the essential parts of religion will emerge triumphant out of this investigation'.[1]

Applying the principle of scientific reasoning to the realm of religion, Swamiji observes,

> 'The first principle of reasoning is that the particular is explained by the general, the general by the more general, until we come to the universal. For instance, we have the idea of *law*. If something happens and we believe that it is the effect of such and such a law, we are satisfied; that is an explanation for us. What we mean by that explanation is that it is proved that this one effect, which had dissatisfied us, is only one particular of a general mass of occurrences which we designate by the word *law*. When one apple fell, Newton was disturbed, but when he found that all apples fell, it was gravitation, and he was satisfied. This is one principle of human knowledge. I see a particular being, a human being, in the street. I refer him to the bigger conception of man, and I am satisfied; I know he is a man by referring him to the more general. So, the particulars are to be referred to the general, the general to the more general, and everything at last to the universal, the last concept that we have, the most universal—that of existence. Existence is the most universal concept'.[2]

When the Upaniṣad says *sadeva saumya idam agra āsit, agra* means not merely chronologically the first, it also means the metaphysical highest.

Swamiji proceeds:

> 'We are all human beings; that is to say, each one of us is, as it were, a particular part of the general concept, humanity. A man, and a cat, and a dog, are all animals. These particular examples, as man, or dog, or cat, are parts of a bigger and more general concept, animal. The man, and the cat, and the dog, and the plant, and the tree, all come under the still more general concept, life. Again, all these, all beings, and all materials, come under the one concept of existence, for we all are in it. This explanation merely means referring the particular to a higher concept,'[3] which, as universal, includes the particular.

Swamiji then refers to another aspect of scientific knowledge. Explanation of a thing must always come from inside it; it should be found in its own nature and does not come from outside. Swamiji points out that what is true of any part of the universe, of any particular phenomenon within it, is also true of the universe as a whole. This must be so for the reason that the universe, by definition, means the whole. The whole is the All and there is nothing outside it by which it can be explained. The explanation of the Whole must be sought in the Whole. The Whole alone must explain the Whole. No extra-cosmic reason can be found to explain the cosmos which is All. The cosmos being the All, there is nothing outside the cosmos which can be used to explain the cosmos.

Swamiji reminds us of still another aspect of scientific knowledge, which he says, is 'the manifestation of the same principle that the explanation of anything comes from inside it'. This other aspect is the law of evolution.

> 'The whole meaning of evolution', says Swamiji, 'is simply that the nature of a thing is reproduced, that the effect is nothing but the cause in another form, that all the potentialities of the effect were present in the cause, that the whole of creation is but an evolution and not a creation. That is to say, every effect is a reproduction of a preceding cause, changed only by the circumstances, and we need not go outside the universe to seek the cause of these changes; they are within. It is unnecessary to seek for any cause outside'.[4]

Swamiji points out that these two scientific principles of explanation from within, and of

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[1] *Complete Works*: Vol I. p. 366.
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 368-369.
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 369.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 371.

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1963

cause evolving into, or manifesting itself as the effect, may appear to undermine the basis of a deistic religion which speaks in terms of an extra-cosmic Creator of the world. Swamiji asks: 'Can there be a religion satisfying these two principles?' and replies, 'I think there can be. In the first place we have to satisfy the principle of generalization. The generalization principle ought to be satisfied along with the principle of evolution'.[5] The ultimate principle of generalization will be the most universal of all generalizations. Being universal, which means including every particular, everything else must come out of it. That implies that 'the highest, ultimate primal cause must be of the same nature as the lowest and the most distant of its effects'. The same vital pulse throbs in the acorn buried in the ground as in the leaf of the top-most twig of the heaven-kissing oak. From the infinitesimal to the Infinite, from dust to Deity, *ābrahma-pipīlikā paryantam*, one principle serves to explain everything in the universe. 'To my mind,' says Swamiji,

> 'if modern science is proving anything again and again, it is this that we are one — mentally, physically and spiritually. It is wrong to say that we are even physically different. Supposing we are materialists, for argument's sake, we shall have to come to this, that the whole universe is simply an ocean of matter of which you and I are little whirlpools. Masses of matter are coming into each whirlpool, taking the whirlpool form, and coming out as matter again. The matter that is in my body may have been in yours a few years ago, or in the sun, or may have been the matter in a plant, and so on, in a continuous state of flux. What is meant by your body and my body? It is the oneness of the body'.[6]

Every material body including ours is compacted of the five elements, the *pancabhūtas* of which the universe itself is made. As each body is a finite expression of the infinite universe, each body belongs to a community of like bodies and is one with the body of the universe. That is signified in the funeral mantra which speeds the eye of the dead person to the Sun, his breath to Vāyu, his mind to the Moon, his warmth to Fire and his dust to the Earth. They all go back to their primeval essences from which they came and of which they were made.

It is also the same with thought says Swamiji. 'It is an ocean of thought, one infinite mass, in which your mind and my mind are like whirlpools.' Swamiji illustrates this oneness of thought, of intelligence or *chit* by the fact of his thought entering the minds of his hearers. 'The whole of our lives is one; we are one even in thought.'

'Coming to a still further generalization', continues Swamiji, 'the essence of Matter and Thought is their potentiality of Spirit, this is the unity from which all have come, and that must be essentially one'. For, the Spirit sleeps in the stone, wakes in the plant, becomes conscious in the animal and knows itself in man. 'We are absolutely one; we are physically one, we are mentally one, and as spirit, it goes without saying that we are one, if we believe in spirit at all. This oneness is the fact that is being proved every day by modern science.' In his characteristic forthright manner, Swamiji declaims:

> 'To proud man it is told: you are the same as that little worm there; think not that you are enormously different from it; you are the same. You have been that in a previous incarnation and the worm has crawled up to this man of which you are so proud. This grand preaching, the oneness of things, making us one with everything that exists, is the great lesson to learn'.[7]

Thus Swamiji teaches that everything which exists, everything animate and inanimate, every living being, man, bird, beast and worm, are all the warp and the woof of the grand Universal. The relation of the parts to the whole is not one of conjunction, but it is one of inherence. It is not *samyoga*, but *samavāya*. The parts do not merely belong to the whole; they constitute the whole. The parts are nothing apart from the whole. The particular is the universal in essence. *Tat Tvamasi.* 'Thou art That', the whole. As Swamiji observes, 'He who says he is different from others, even by a hair's breadth, immediately becomes miserable. Happiness comes to him who knows this oneness, who knows he is one with the Universe'.[8]

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[5] *Ibid.*, p. 371.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 372.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 372.

The Vedanta, Swamiji explains, embodies the religion and the philosophy of the universal. *Sarvam khalvidam brahma*: 'All this is Brahman,' means,

> 'the Brahman, the God of the Vedanta has nothing outside of itself; nothing at all. All this indeed is He: He is in the universe: He is the universe Himself. "Thou art the man, thou art the woman, thou art the old man tottering in his step." He is here. Him we see and feel; in Him we live, move and have our being.'[9]

We are all of us manifestations of that universal each from a particular centre, from a particular point of view. The universal is expressed as much in a beam of light as in the entire orb of the Sun. 'You and I', says Swamiji, 'are little bits, little channels, little expressions, all living inside that infinite ocean of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss'.[10] We exist as particular, because the universal exists. Our intelligence is the same in kind, though small in degree, as that Universal Intelligence. Our little joys, the coloured bubbles of the tiny pools of our lives are only minute fractions of the limitless ocean of the Bliss of the Supreme Universal. As Sri Śankara, speaking of this universal that is the Brahman of the Vedanta, would have it:

या ब्रह्मादि पिपीलिकान्त तनुषुप्रोता ।
येन जगत् सकलं चिन्मात्र विस्तारितम् ।
यत् सौख्यांबुधिलेशलेशतः इमे शक्रादयो निर्वृताः ।

'It is that which is the stuff of everything from the mighty Brahman to the minute worm'; 'it is the light of consciousness by which the whole world is illumined'; 'it is that ocean of bliss by a fraction of which Indra and others feel they have attained the height of their felicity.'

Swamiji paraphrases the same idea in his inimitable words compacted of truth and fervour. He says:

> 'The difference between man and man, between angels and man, between man and animals, between animals and plants, between plants and stones, is not in kind, because every one from the highest angel to the lowest particle of matter, is but an expression of that one infinite ocean, and the difference is only in degree. I am a low manifestation, you may be a higher, but in both the materials are the same. You and I are outlets of the same channel, and that is God; as such your nature is God, and so is mine. You are of the nature of God by your birthright; and so am I. You may be an angel of purity, and I may be the blackest of demons. Nevertheless my birthright is that infinite ocean of Existence, Knowledge and Bliss. So is yours. You have manifested more today. Wait, I will manifest myself more yet, for I have it all within me'.[11]

Utilising still another principle of modern science, Swamiji observes that science teaches, that what is finer and more subtle is truer than what is gross which is only an appearance, an object of perception by the senses. The finer is the truer, the gross is comparatively less true. That which is fine *par excellence*, which is most subtle, that is the ultimate Truth, the ultimate Reality. That the eye cannot see; for, as the Upaniṣad says, the eye itself sees only by That. It is That which the ear cannot hear, but it is That by which the ear hears; it is That which speech cannot describe, for it is That by which speech finds utterance. The mind too cannot conceive It; for the mind thinks only by It.

In the realm of religion, the Supreme Reality is conceived as a Personal God. Swamiji contends that the Personal God can never be a universal in the way he has taught us to think of the universal. For a Personal God has to be pitted over against a Personal Devil who militates, by the very fact of his existence against the universality of the Personal God. 'The Personal God is not a true generalization. We have to go beyond, to the Impersonal. In That, the universe exists with all its joys and miseries, for whatever exists

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[8] *Ibid.*, p. 373.
[9] *Ibid.*
[10] *Ibid.*
[11] *Ibid.*, pp. 373-374.

1963

in it has all come from the Impersonal . . . Both good and evil are different aspects of the same thing'[12] in varying contexts of time, place and circumstance. That which is good today, may be evil tomorrow. What is good or evil for one man may be the opposite for another. Good and evil belong to the relative world, to phenomena. And, there are those who make a compact with evil and say : 'Evil, be thou my good'. The universal is the absolute, not the relative. The Impersonal God is not a relative God ; He engulfs in His being both good and evil. To Him they are neither good or evil as such. They are the neutral fibres of His being. To us, who see darkly through our sensuous eyes, circumscribed by our outlook, they appear to our partial, and so, purblind vision, as good or evil. The true Universal is beyond good and evil. As the poet said, 'there is nothing good or evil but thinking makes it so'.

Swamiji assures us that this view does not make short work of the Personal God. For, the Impersonal is the ground of the Personal. The Personal God will remain as an object of worship and prayer, but on a better basis. The universe in its various forms, divine and human are only various readings of the same Impersonal. The Personal God is the highest reading that can be attained to, of that Impersonal, by the human intellect.

Swamiji goes on to explain :

> 'When the Vedanta says you and I are God, it does not mean the Personal God. To take an example, out of a mass of clay, a huge elephant of clay is manufactured, and out of the same clay, a little clay mouse is made. Would the clay mouse ever be able to become the clay elephant ? But put them both in water and they are both clay ; as clay they are both one, but as mouse and elephant there will be an eternal difference between them.'[13]

The Infinite, the Impersonal is like the clay in the example. To know the Personal, one must first know the Impersonal. If you know the clay, you can know the clay elephant and the clay mouse. Nay more, knowledge of the Impersonal makes for a better understanding of the Personal.

Every one of us then is in essence only the Impersonal. Particularizations in the form of body, race, nationality, sex, caste, profession, status etc. divide and demarcate the Universal constraining it into limitations which disrupt its wholeness and detract from its fullness. Each of us is the whole, would we but know it. And then we would not speak of ourselves as Devadatta or Yajnadatta, as John or Jane, but in the plenum of the universal as we would each one of us exclaim :

अहं निर्विकल्पो निराकाररूपो विभुः ।

'It is self-evident to my senses that I am one with the universe. I am one with the air that surrounds me, one with heat, one with light, eternally one with the whole Universal Being, the eternal subject in the heart who says, "I am the deathless one, the sleepless one, ever awake, the immortal, whose glory never dies, whose powers never fail. I am one with That".' शिवः केवलोऽहं, शिवोऽहं, शिवोऽहम् ।

The world will be a better place to live in, for it will be filled by better people if we realize that the True is the Universal and that the partial and particular are but segments of that Truth. Then, says Swamiji, 'the whole life of man will be changed'. That soul is strong that realizes this universal, that has become one with it. This sense of identity with the universal invests one with the strength born of dispassion, with wisdom born of enlightenment, with a joy born of renunciation. Swamiji declares, 'that soul is strong which has become one with the Lord ; none else is strong'. It is this strength of soul which he refers to when he quotes the Upaniṣadic text :

नायमात्मा बलहीनेन लभ्यः ।

Addressing his English audience, Swamiji said :

> 'In your own Bible, what do you think was the cause of that strength of Jesus of Nazareth, that immense infinite strength which laughed at

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[12] *Ibid.*, p. 375.

[13] *Ibid.*, p. 378.

> traitors and blessed those that were willing to murder him. It was that "I and my Father are one"; it was that prayer, "Father, just as I am one with you, so make them all one with me."'[14]

Such a man who has realized his individual Self to be one with the Universal Self is called *ātmavān*. The strength of the spirit known as *Brahmatejas* courses in his veins, vitalizes his entire frame; he becomes a veritable dynamo of the spirit radiating spiritual energy all round him. His very breath is a benediction, his words are wisdom, and his every act becomes a consecration. The altar at which he worships is of the Impersonal God who requires no demonstrations, no proofs. For He is closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet. 'He is in the heart of our hearts,' says Swamiji, 'Bodies and minds change; misery, happiness, good and evil come and go; days and years roll on; life comes and goes; but He dies not'.

The Vedas declare:

वेदाहमेतं पुरुषं महान्तं आदित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ।

'I know that great Puruṣa, resplendent like the Sun, beyond darkness.' The darkness is the darkness of ignorance and when that is dispelled by discipline, dispassion and discrimination, one knows the Puruṣa in the heart and, to know Him is to be Him. *Brahmavid Brahmaiva bhavati.*

And, finally as Swamiji says:

> 'In that supreme universal Puruṣa and through Him we know everything. In Him and through Him we see everything. In Him and through Him we sense, we think, we live and we are. And that "I" which we mistake to be a little "I" limited, is not only my "I", but yours, the "I" of everyone, of the animals, of the angels, of the lowest of the low. That "I am" is the same in the murderer as in the saint, the same in the rich as in the poor, the same in man as in woman, the same in man as in animals. From the lowest amoeba to the highest angel, He resides in every soul, and eternally declares, "I am He, I am He". (सोऽहम्, सोऽहम् ।) When we have understood that voice eternally present there, when we have learnt this lesson, the whole universe will have expressed its secret. Nature will have given up her secret to us. Nothing more remains to be known. Thus we find that truth for which all religions search, that all this knowledge of material sciences are but secondary. (यं लब्ध्वा चापरं लाभं मन्यते नाधिकं ततः।) That is the only true knowledge which makes us one with this Universal God of the Universe.'[15]

A word may be added about the social, political and religious implications of this universalism. Seeing that the universal is the truth and the particulars apart from it do not constitute the whole truth, it is the part of particulars not to fight with one another, but to co-exist co-operatively for the realization of the Spirit of the universal. In this context, therefore, social differences need not make for jealousies, rivalries and exploitations. Politics need not be a race for extirpation and domination, and Religion need not mean fanaticism and intolerance. As Swamiji said in his Chicago Address:

> 'Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendent fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilization, and sent whole nations to despair. Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be more advanced than it is now'.

Let us hope with the advent of Swamiji that the death-knell of all fanaticism at all levels and of all kinds has been tolled and that all uncharitable feelings between persons wending their way to the same goal will disappear. Swami Vivekananda's Message of Universalism had never a more insistent significance at any time than it has today. The world will be celebrating his birth centenary to real purpose only if it reminds itself of this message and translates it in the details of daily conduct of its people in small things as in great.

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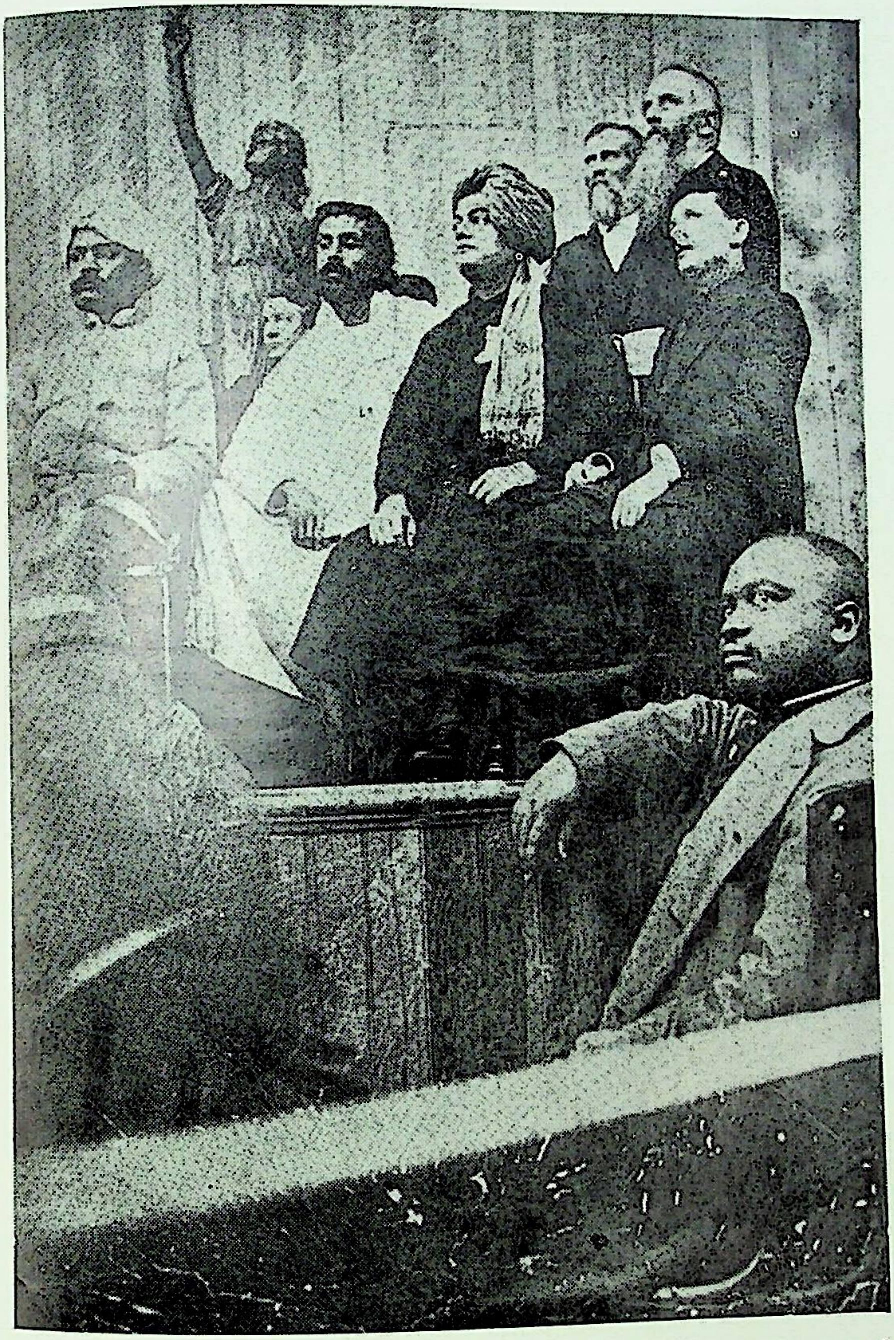
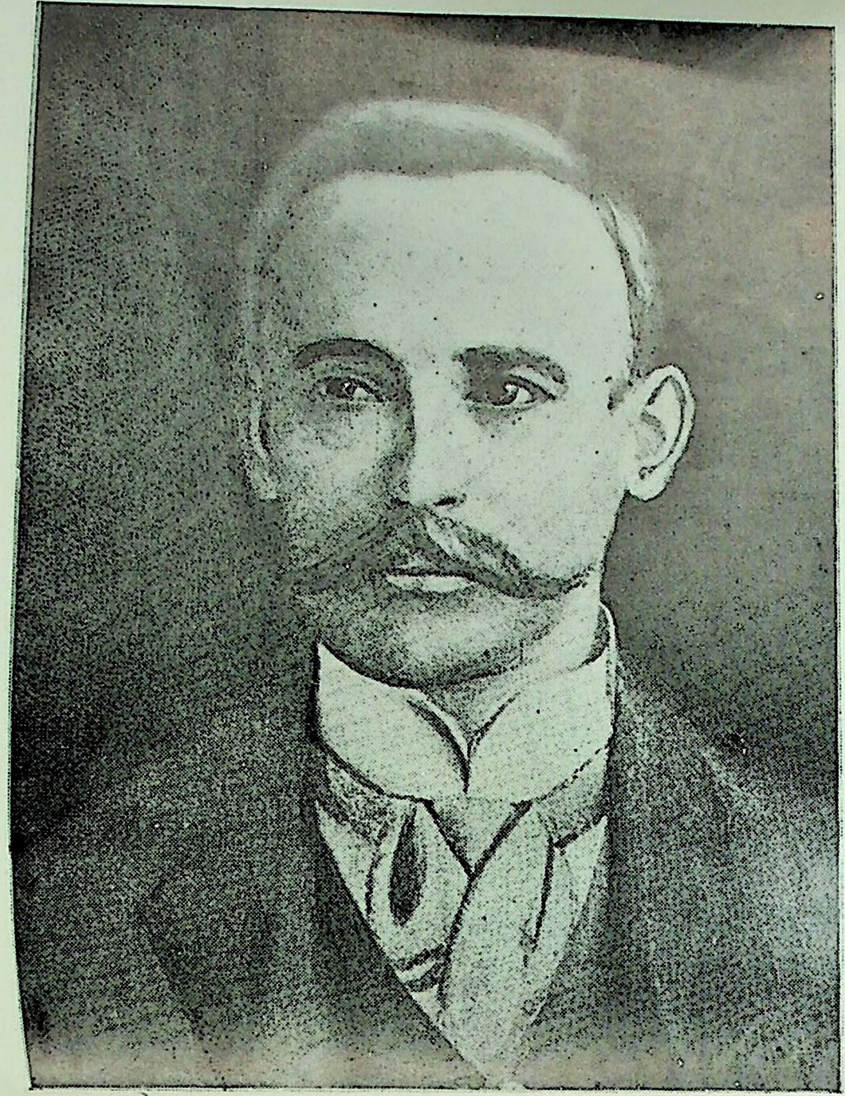
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 380.

[15] *Ibid.*, p. 381.



Vivekananda with some of the delegates on the dais at the Parliament of Religions (1893). (*By courtesy*: Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York.)



U. Thant, Secretary General of the United Nations, addressing the guests at the dinner held by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, at the Warwick Hotel, on March 28, 1963 to celebrate the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda. (See pages 305-307 for his speech.)

← Mr. J. J. Goodwin

(One of the Western disciples of Swamiji. He took shorthand notes of a good many of Swamiji's extempore lectures and has made them available to us. He followed Swamiji to India but passed away at a very early age, at Ootacamund, in 1898. Swamiji was very much moved by his death and wrote in memorium to Goodwin the poem '*Requiescat in Pace*'.)

BACK TO THE UPANIṢADS

PRAVRAJIKA ATMAPRANA

[Pravrajika Atmaprana is a monastic member of Sri Sarada Math, Dakshineshwar. Her book on Sister Nivedita is a scholarly work and was duly appreciated by the Government of India as such. In this short appreciation she shows how Swamiji took us back to the message of the Upaniṣads. — *Ed.*]

As a person who is hit hard on the head feels stunned and remains inactive for sometime, this country of ours, oppressed by successive invasions and conquests by outsiders lay quite dazed during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The impact of alien civilizations and the newness and strangeness of foreign thought and conduct bewildered her, with the loss of her freedom, even to react against conditions; she lost her joy, hope and virility.

When gradually in the first quarter of the nineteenth century she revived from the effects of the repeated blows, the learned and sensitive minds of the best of her children realized that she must be made strong again. Tutored by the foreigners they began to search for the causes of degeneration in the social, economic, cultural and religious life of the people of the country, and started to think in terms of reforms and readjustments — such as would suit the modern ways of life about which they had learnt from the English. With unbounded zeal the social reformers, religious reformers and political workers became active, taking upon themselves the task of re-building India. Their way was more negative than constructive and they started by condemning and abusing orthodoxy.

Against an array of these great reformers stood only one, whose solitary voice — clear and strong — put a stop to this destructive attitude. He was Swami Vivekananda. He had the prophetic eye to see that India contained within herself sufficient forces to bring about a resurgence and that tit-bit reforms would do her no good. Sister Nivedita so aptly described him as 'the worker at foundations'. He said, 'Aye, children, to try to remedy evils is not the true way.... My own experience has taught me that. Therefore I cannot join anyone of these condemning societies. Why condemn? ... To the reformers I will point out that I am a greater reformer than any one of them. They want to reform only little bits. I want root-and-branch reform. Where we differ is in the method. Theirs is the method of destruction, mine is that of construction. I do not believe in reform; I believe in growth.... Feed the national life with the fuel it wants, but the growth is its own.'

No extraneous forces can help the growth of an individual or a race or a nation, as do the slow-going yet formative forces of its own national life. What is the life-centre of our country — what is her life-force? More than once has Swamiji said that it is religion and religion alone. 'In India, religious life forms the centre, the keynote of the whole music of national life; and if any nation attempts to throw off its national vitality, the direction which has become its own through the transmission of centuries — that nation dies, if it succeeds in the attempt.'

Swamiji offers no apology for accepting religion or spirituality as our ideal as do some modern minds. On the contrary he stoutly supports the choice made by us in trying to solve the world-riddle by developing an intense faith in God and the Eternal Soul, an intense aversion for the world and belief in the power of renunciation.

न प्रजया न घनेन त्यागेनैके अमृतत्वमानशुः ।

'Not by progeny, not by wealth, but by renunciation alone immortality is reached.' —

this is the direction shown to the world by India while the other countries have tried to solve their problems on the material plane, and have all failed in the past. Our whole national mind is imbued with the ideal proclaimed as far back as in the days of the Upaniṣads :—

ईशावास्यमिदँ सर्वं यत्किंच जगत्यां जगत् ।
तेन त्यक्तेन भुञ्जीथा मा गृधः कस्यस्विद्धनम् ॥

Swamiji not only preaches this ideal, he goes a step further and warns the country, 'Mark you, if you give up that spirituality, leaving it aside to go after the materializing civilization of the West, the result will be that in three generations you will be an extinct race ; because the backbone of the nation will be broken, the foundation upon which the national edifice has been built will be undermined, and the result will be annihilation all round.'

The modern materialistic minded person may not accept it but it is a fact that, while hosts of other powerful nations have died, India still survives, because of this life-force of hers. And so even after years of stress and strain she proves herself to be not old and effete, but full of energy and hope. She is building up her lost strength by integrating all the different elements that went to make her great in the past.

It is Swamiji's philosophy of mobility and vitality, built on the message of the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* — चरैवेति —'move on'—which is helping India to go forward today. It is he who pointed out that the way to go forward is to look at the past. The two propositions may seem incompatible, but they are not. Out of the past is built the future and hence *recognition* of that past greatness alone can breathe life into the nation.

The Upaniṣads teach us that spiritual awareness of the divinity of man alone can bring about a synthesis of the physical, mental and spiritual forces that are in him. Intellectual attainment or physical vigour by themselves are not sufficient to help in harmonizing the different elements that build a man's life. Nor do material possessions alone give happiness. It is unfortunate, however, that the modern man in India has forgotten this and as a result has lost the joy and radiance of a full life: Bereft of spiritual awareness he has no aim to realize, no faith to live by.

In his brilliant exposition of Vedanta, Swamiji has told us what the Upaniṣads can teach us and has preached their message of love, freedom and fearlessness. 'Bold, brave, beyond the conception of the present day, stand the giant minds of the Sages of the Upaniṣads, declaring the noblest truths that have ever been preached to humanity, without any compromise, without any fear. This, my countrymen, I want to lay before you.... Go back to your Upaniṣads, the shining, the strengthening, the bright philosophy, and part from all these mysterious things, all these weakening things. Take up this philosophy; the greatest truths are the simplest things in the world, simple as your own existence. The truths of the Upaniṣads are before you. Take them up, live up to them, and the salvation of India will be at hand.'

Thus in the Upaniṣads alone, according to Swamiji, has the nation to search for the meaning of life. The Upaniṣads will also bring to light the truth that spirituality consists not in meaningless rituals or vain philosophical speculations — but richer inner life. Their message of renunciation which presupposes an intense spirit of sacrifice for aspiring after Truth and Freedom has a great significance in it and India will have to hold on to it till the end of time.

If India heeds Swamiji's words while she is busy building her strength anew she will one day become greater than she ever was.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S PHILOSOPHY OF SERVICE

K. CHANDRASEKHARAN

[Sri K. Chandrasekharan, M.A., B.L., Advocate and *litterateur*, Madras is not unknown to the readers of The *Vedanta Kesari*. He brings out in this paper Swamiji's concept of service in a telling manner. — *Ed.*]

'In various Upaniṣads we find that this Vedanta philosophy is not the outcome of meditation in the forests only, but that the very best parts of it were thought out and expressed by brains which were busiest in everyday affairs of life,'[1] declared Swami Vivekananda to a Western audience. The reference was to monarchs of the type of Janaka to whom Shuka went for instructions regarding realization of Truth, or of the type of Pravahana Jaivali of Pānchālas to whom Gautama, son of Aruni, went for instructions regarding life after death and transmigration. The emphasis the Swami wanted to lay was on the practicality of Vedanta. It is only while engaged in the conflicts of life that one can also develop the detachment required for realization of the fundamentals of existence and its goal. His terse way of putting it was always *Nivṛtti* in *Pravṛtti* i.e., detachment in action.

According to him, a life divorced from religion or spirituality will not be worth living. For, unless the ideal of philosophy infuses a person, he cannot speculate merely upon it as of any real value. Further, if philosophy is not of a practical kind, surely it could not have been conceived at all in the human brain. It is amidst the strifes and struggles of life that man also gets the urge for acquiring peace of mind. Without the scorching rays of the sun, no need will be felt for the cool shades of the tree. Indeed, it is not without significance that the Bhagavad-Gītā (Lord's song) emanated on the battle-field — a place for action and action alone. The kernel of the celestial song turns upon action incessantly or performance of one's duties, while resigning oneself to a Higher Power for the results, whatever they be.

Striving for betterment without aiming at rewards can easily strike a person, unfamiliar with the age-long tenets of Hindu philosophy, as incomprehensible and robbing one of the natural inducement for action. Ambition and passion alone are normally capable of acting as spurs to anyone's attempts to gain the good things of life. Otherwise, there may not be the intensity of endeavour to achieve or accomplish a task. Well, it is here the Vedanta steps in to clear the mind, of obsessions, and lead it towards what is the ultimate goal of all endeavour and the purpose of man's career on earth.

The Hindu philosophy is beautiful in stimulating the man of action not to lose heart in his strivings. If results should always crown one's efforts, then there is no need for him to pause for thinking. It is because often times disappointments and unexpected reversals happen, while treading even the path of duty, that the philosophy of working without attachment to results saves man from the effects of inaction and untoward reactions. He is forced to introspect and probe the mystery of a higher Ordinance, ruling lives and their work here.

The imminent need of the world, according to the Swami, is the grand idea of the spiritual oneness of the universe or creation. The Indian thought has graphically speculated upon the principle of *samaṣṭi* or ocean of matter in which everything, whether the sun or the moon or the stars are all but little wavelets. Again it has also formulated the basic concept that 'behind the idea of the unity of the whole show, the real soul is also One'.

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[1] *Swami Vivekananda's works* (Vol II) *Practical Vedanta* (8th Edition) p. 290.

The ever melting heart and the ever alert mind of the Swami were both switched on to a tremendous employment of their capacities in the cause of the uplift of the masses of India. Their dire poverty and backwardness in all respects, engaged his attention so much that without alleviating their unenviable condition he could feel no rest which he so much deserved. He even conceived of the practical application of the Advaitic philosophy as conducive to the solution of the acute problem facing the country. The oneness of all life should appeal to all hearts and move them to help others needing succour. In its eternal sanction of all morality should arise the feeling 'that you and I are not only brothers, but that you and I are really one'. This identity can be felt through love also. The Swami gave an illustration of such love and its ways from a poem of a Sufi poet. The story is that a lover came and knocked at the door of his beloved and sought entrance. 'Who is there?' came the query; 'I am' answered the lover. The door remained unopened. A second time the lover knocked at the door. Again to the question 'Who is there?' he gave the reply 'I am so and so'. The door was as much closed as before. Hence a third attempt the lover made, saying in reply: 'I am thou, my love', when the door was flung open. The mystical interpretation is easy of grasp, that the spiritual awakening will be only complete when all feeling of separateness from every other being gets submerged or annihilated in one. If the Western world needs it for curing it of its rampant nationalism, India much more requires the message for saving the downtrodden masses from the abject penury and distress they are undergoing.

The political slavery of his days, added to the backwardness of the vast population of India, happened to consume every bit of his immediate attention. No sooner was he back from the West amidst his own *Gurubhāis*, disciples of the *Paramahamsa*, than he struck upon organizing the Sri Ramakrishna Mission, where monks of the Order would not only renounce the householder's life but pledge themselves to work, such as relieving the country of poverty, famine, epidemics, insanitation and lack of education. How much still fresh and inspiring are his words, uttered six or seven decades back:

> 'What our country wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills which nothing can resist, which can penetrate into the mysteries and secrets of the universe, and will accomplish their purpose even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face in every fashion. That is what we want, and that can only be created, established and strengthened, by understanding and reaching the ideal of the Advaita, that ideal of the Oneness of all.'[2]

Let us just view how Swami Vivekananda behaved after the signal success of his mission to the Parliament of Religions at Chicago. The unprecedented ovation his first speech received as well as the unusual and continued recognition of his invincible personality at the hands of foreigners, did not go to his head. For not even a moment was he feeling elated with his initial success, but kept his mind uninfluenced by the contrast in affluence and material advance the new country presented. On the other hand, whenever he was afforded a welcome befitting royalty, he was meek and remembering his own poor country with its great population, steeped not only in indigence but ignorance as well. It is recorded by his chroniclers how one night when he was lying on a downy bed at a wealthy host's guest-room, his thoughts flew back to his own countrymen, and unable to bear the feelings gushing in his heart for their abject state, he rolled to the ground weeping all the while, and broke out in words wringing out his heart's blood: 'O Mother, what do I care for name and fame when my motherland remains sunk in utmost poverty! . . . who will raise the masses of India? Who will give them bread? Show me, show me, oh Mother, how can I help them?'[3]

The *Daridra-Narayanas* of his country became the precious possession of his entire heart. He dwelt upon schemes that would promote the welfare of the masses. He thought of starting homes for the poor, the sick and the forlorn. He planned for organizations which would be manned by devoted and zealous workers drawn from the Ramakrishna Order of monks. For, to him it appeared the work to serve the poor and the sick was the easiest and surest path to self-realization. Once a young man approached him complaining that however much he closed his eyes in meditation and sat all by himself in a solitary cell, he could not have even a glimpse of the haven of serenity he was panting for. The Swami, in his characteristic manner of impressing listeners by his inordinate power of conviction, uttered :

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[2] *Complete Works*: Vol. III. page 190.
[3] *Life of Swami Vivekananda* (By his Eastern & Western Disciples).

> 'If you take my word, you will have first of all to open the door of your house ; then you have to serve to the best of your ability ; one who is ill and has no one to look after him, for him you will have to take medicine and diet and nurse him ; one who has nothing to eat, you will have to feed him ; one who is ignorant, you will have to teach him, well-educated as you are. My advice to you is, if you want peace of mind, you have to serve others in this way as best as you can.'[4]

The orthodox Advaitin may find this philosophy of service preached by the Swami a bit removed from what has come down to us from the greatest Advaitins as the path for the Jñāni. So long as the Ātman is said to be without quality or form and the only existing One impregnating all creation, the theory of service or the concept of two entities, the server and the served as distinct, may appear knocking out the bottom of the philosophy of Advaita. A clever inquirer asked him the question : 'You talk of service, charity and doing good to the world ; these are, after all, in the domain of Māyā. When, according to Vedanta, the goal of man is attainment of Mukti by breaking all bondage, what is the use of preaching things which help the mind on mundane matters ?'[5] Instantaneously his answer shattered the catechiser : 'Is not the idea of Mukti also in the domain of Māyā ? Does not the Vedanta teach that the Ātman is ever free ? What is striving for Mukti to the Ātman, then ?' Indeed, the Swami in thus replying was not stifling a legitimate doubt. He was only thinking on the lines of what one finds in the *Gaudapāda-kārika* :

> न बद्धो न च साधकः न मुमुक्षुः नैव मुक्तः इत्येषा परमार्थता ।
>
> (Neither bondsman, nor achiever, neither aspirer after liberation, nor even a liberated one : thus it is the most real of truths.)

Service to humanity, the Swami evidently resorted to, as a panacea for all the ills of *avidyā* the soul is subject to. The *Samskāras*, of which the Vedas speak and the Upaniṣads dilate upon for cleansing the soul of the accumulation of dross by its residence in bodies, can also include service to humanity in all social and intellectual matters as a more appropriate item in the programme for the regeneration of Man. *Chittasuddhi* as a preparatory stage for the career of the soul in its evolution towards higher planes, can be certainly acquired in so many ways. Says the *Yoga Sūtra* :

> मैत्री करुणा मुदितोपेक्षाणां भावनातः चित्तप्रसादनम् ।
>
> (Friendly understanding, compassion, cheer and forgiveness are all contributions to the purity of mind.)

Similarly, service to one's own countrymen will deliver one out of his ego and self-centredness. Patriotism must have its source in the desire to save the starving millions. Hence, in words of fire, he exhorted :

> 'Love opens the most impossible gates ; love is the gate to all the secrets of the universe. Feel, therefore, my would-be reformers, would-be patriots ! Do you feel ? Do you feel that millions and millions of the descendants of Gods and sages have become next-door neighbours to brutes ? Do you feel millions are starving to-day and millions have been starving for ages ?.... Have you forgotten all about your name, your fame, your

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[4] *Ibid.*, p. 486.

[5] *Ibid.*

wives, your children, your property, even your own bodies? Have you done that? That is the first step to becoming a patriot.'[6]

In a greater mood of self-effacement flowed words from him thus: 'Who cared about this Parliament of Religions? Here are my own flesh and blood sinking every day, and who cared for them? This was my first step.'[7]

Once or twice he even tried to convince his followers of the capacity of soul-force exerting itself from a distance and through the hardest of enclosures even. Swami Vivekananda told some of his countrymen: 'If you live in a cave, your thoughts will permeate even through the stone walls, go vibrating all over the world for hundreds of years, may be, until they will catch hold of some brain, and work out there. Such is the power of thought, of sincerity, and of purity of purpose.'[8]

So the Swami never afterwards failed to harp on the words: 'I have come my children, to tell you all my plans; if you hear them I am ready to work with you. If you hear them not, even kick me out of India, I'll come back and tell you that we are all sinking.'[9] The burning sincerity of his purpose cannot be better expressed than in his own words, which even when read seem to possess wings and soar high before our very eyes.

The splendid record of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission's humanitarian services speaks volumes of the sure and steady foundations laid by Swamiji himself. His own philosophy of service served as a hand-maid to his active propaganda for Advaita itself. He reconciles the two philosophies also in his own inimitable manner:

> 'Do good to others! Where is the explanation? Why is it that all great men have preached the brotherhood of mankind, and greater men the brotherhood of all lives? Because, whether they are conscious of it or not, behind all that, through all their irrational and personal superstitions, was peering forth the eternal light of the Self denying all manifoldness, and asserting that the whole universe is but one.'[10]

Further he added by way of reconciling even the other philosophical systems such as Dwaita (dualism) and Viśiṣṭādvaita (qualified non-dualism) by saying:

> 'The Advaitin does not say dualism is wrong; it is a right view, but a lower one. It is on the way to truth; therefore let everybody work out his own vision of this universe, according to his own ideas; injure none, deny the position of none; take man where he stands and, if you can, lend him a helping hand and put him on a higher position, but do not injure and do not destroy. All come to truth in the long run.'[11]

How great and true are his words and how much more practical his *philosophy of service* to humanity, whether it be to bring relief in food, in education, in eradication of disease and poverty, in whatever way it be! Every kind of service to others is indissolubly wedded to the basic concept of *oneness* of all life; and the optimism informing his words are worth repetition a thousand times:

> 'When man has seen himself as one with the Infinite being of the universe, when all separateness has ceased, when all men and women, all Gods and angels, all animals and plants and the whole universe has melted into that Oneness, then all fear disappears.'

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[6] *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda,* Vol III, p. 225.

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 226.

[8] *Ibid.,* p. 227.

[9] *Ibid.,* p. 227.

[10] *Ibid.,* Vol. II, (8th Edn.) Atman p. 252.

[11] *Ibid.,* Vol. II 8th Edn., Atman, p. 253.

VIVEKANANDA: THE HERO-PROPHET OF THE MODERN WORLD

VISHWANATH PRASAD VARMA

[Dr. Vishwanath Prasad Varma, M.A. (Patna), M.A. (Columbia), PH.D. (Chicago), is Director, Institute of Public Administration, Patna University. His scholarly articles have appeared in the *Vedanta Kesari,* from time to time. In this article Dr. Varma deals with Swamiji's contribution to world-thought and kindred topics and lastly shows how as hero-prophet Swamiji has influenced many a great mind and still continues to do so. — *Ed.*]

The personality of Vivekananda

Swami Vivekananda (1863-1902) was a mighty, majestic and comprehensive personality. Although of athletic muscular build, he had a mystic consciousness attuned with the absolute of the monistic idealists. But simultaneously he was a gigantic intellectual, thoroughly at home in the greatest secrets of metaphysical Vedantism, European philosophy and elements of modern science, and had a burning enthusiasm for the alleviation of human suffering. The person who could perform the colossal feat of mastering the first eleven volumes of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (out of a total of twenty) had also a luminous and passionate urge to experience directly the ecstatic absorption with the subject-objectless (*asamprajnāta*) beatific supernal state. The late Brajendra Nath Seal testifies to the deep and restless passion of Vivekananda to apprehend the highest truth from his early young days. Although the Swami was a revered teacher of the monistic Vedanta, still the devotional mood — characteristic of the great Vedantic Acharyas like Madhava and Vallabha — was also prominent in his person. The world knows him as a gigantic mind who employed his stupendous will-power and energy to bring about a regeneration of India.[1] This monk, social energist and humanist philanthropist wanted, as he said, to fall on the society like an avalanche. He was a pilgrim of the city of God and a warrior for the cause of the suppressed. Hence the Swami's personality was unique in its comprehensiveness and deep sensitiveness to the evils prevalent in the socio-economic and moral structure of the country. He preached both monastic asceticism and social service. His intellectual vision was immensely clear and he could penetrate into the currents and cross-currents that were manifested in the history of India. Before his vigorous mind everything from the Ṛgveda to Kālidāsa and Kant and Spencer was clear and luminous.[2] He claimed to have realized the supracosmic truth but still he worked with the strength of a lion. His soul gave one the impression not of the silent 'Puruṣa' of the Sānkhya but of the active *Atman* of the Vaiśeṣika as also of the *Atman* of the Upaniṣads — the supreme energizer of the cosmic manifestation. It appeared as if the '*vīrya*' and '*ojas*' of the Mahabharatan heroes and the stalwart protagonists of Hindu imperialism in the days of the Mauryas and the Guptas was combined in his magnificent personality, with the spiritual 'tejas' characteristic of the ancient seers of the Veda and Vedanta. Hence the Swami was able to achieve miraculous success in his mission in a short life-time of only thirty-nine years.

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[1] The intense nationalism and patriotism of Vivekananda is revealed in this declaration of his: 'For the next fifty years.... let all other vain Gods disappear for that time from our minds. This is the only God that is awake, our own race, everywhere His hands, everywhere His feet, everywhere His ears, He covers everything. All other Gods are sleeping. What vain Gods shall we go after and yet cannot worship the God that we see all round us, the *Viraat*?... The first of all worship is the worship of the *Viraat* — of those all around us.... These are all our Gods, — men and animals, and the first Gods we have to worship are our own countrymen.....' ("The Future of India").

[2] Dr. B. N. Seal (in an article in the *Prabuddha Bharata,* 1907) says that the early optimistic theism which Vivekananda had imbibed from the Brahmo Samaj was shaken by his study of John Stuart Mill's *Three Essays on Religion.* He was also familiar with the sceptical philosophy of Hume. But more than the writings of philosophers, Shelley's Hymn to the spirit of Intellectual Beauty moved him. *The Life of Swami Vivekananda* (Advaita Ashrama, 1933), pp. 92-93. Vivekananda had studied Kant and Schopenhauer, Mill and Spencer. He also probed into the writings of the ancient Aristotelian school. For sometime he had found intellectual consolation in the positivism of Comte. *Life of Swami Vivekananda,* Vol. I, 'The Man in the Making', p. 87. But Vivekananda found final satisfaction neither in Platonic immutable ideas nor in Hegel's dialectical immanentism and universal Reason but in the Vedanta of the monistic school.

The triumphant marches of Swami Vivekananda the 'Hindu Napoleon',[3] in the American continent and Europe demonstrated to the people that Hinduism had grown once more vigorous and was intent upon making a spiritual, moral and cultural-philosophical propaganda in the world. Asia had given to Europe the main elements of religion and culture in the past (e.g., Judaism, Christianity, Oriental influences on Roman religion, Islam in the Iberian Peninsula, — also the influence of Vedantic thought on Thoreau and on the transcendental Over-soul of Emerson) and Asia wanted once more to provide moral inspiration to Europe. Vivekananda's powerful and eloquent orations on the stage of the World Parliament of Religions at Chicago in September 1893 gave to our motherland a new self-confidence which is the true psychological precursor of an independent foreign policy. The nefarious game of Europeanization of this land of the sages received a great challenge. Hence Vivekananda succeeded in imparting a dynamic and heroic spiritual fervour to the formation of the culture-complex of India.[4] The same vigour which Luther and Calvin had imparted to Western Europe seemed to be infused by Vivekananda in the passive calm of the contemporary Indian civilization.[5] There is no doubt that the influence of Vivekananda on some of the leaders of Bengal like Aurobindo and Subhas Bose was deep.

Hinduism as a Universal Religion

The Swami made a distinct and notable contribution to world religion, in his championship of Hinduism as a universal gospel of ethical humanism and spiritual idealism. Hinduism had been the subject of intense misrepresentation at the hands of Christian missionaries who suffered from 'imperialism-complex' and were actuated with a sense of burden to 'civilize' the black men and brown men by clearing the road for the economic exploitation of Asia and Africa (as can be seen from a study of the rise of modern imperialism from 1870). But Hinduism was, to Vivekananda, a comprehensive gospel, which could shelter within its bosom the profound philosophic intellect by its Nyāya, Sāmkhya and Vedanta; could offer to the psychologist its vast store of psychic wisdom of the *Rājayoga*; could inspire the devotee, (with the enchanted hymns of the *Sāmaveda* and the devotional songs of Tulsidas or of the Alvars and Nayanmars, the saints of the South); and finally could give to the puissant and hectic worker the doctrine of selfless action as enunciated in the celestial song of Sri Krishna. Hinduism did not mean to him the cluster of obscure cults and ritualistic superstitions, orthodox dogmas and primitive ceremonialism, which unfortunately the superficial European critic is very keen in observing. It signified to him a body of moral and spiritual injunctions and primordial super-temporal laws for the uplift of humanity —

> एते जातिदेशकालसमयानवच्छिन्नाः सार्वभौमाः
> महाव्रतम् ।

To him Hinduism was the mother of all religions and this can be, to a great extent, demonstrated historically. The ancient Vedic religion influenced Buddhism, and the latter was possibly a potent factor in the rise of Christianity. The older Vedic religion also influenced the religion of Persia and Media and the reformist ethical movement which began in Judea in the 6th century B.C. was inspired by some aspects of the Western Asiatic religions (of Persia and India) which the Jews came to learn during the Babylonian Captivity. The researches that are being carried into the antique history of Egypt and Western Asia are demonstrating the cultural penetration of ancient Indian religion in far-off lands. In the Tell-el-Amarna letters (c. 1380-1350 B.C.) we come across Vedic names, e.g. 'Artamanya' which, according to Keith, certainly suggests 'Ṛtamanya' (A. B. Keith, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, 1936, p. 573). The 'Ṛta' is a vital concept of ancient Indian philosophy. The Mittanian gods (referred to in records of about 1400 B.C.) have a nomenclature which is definitely Vedic.

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[3] Due to his heroic mood and sometimes even domineering character Vivekananda was called 'the Hindu Napoleon'. R. Rolland, *The Life of Vivekananda*, p. 19, says 'within him there was a Napoleon'.

[4] Vivekananda once declared: 'Expansion is life, contraction is death'. (*Works*, Vol. IV, p. 311).

[5] The heroic action of leaders of modern Indian renaissance like Dayananda and Vivekananda reminds me of the personalities of St. Paul, Kalipha Omar and Martin Luther.

Vivekananda was a representative of entire Hinduism from the Vedas to Vaiṣṇavism. He did not emphasize the Samhitas of the Veda to the same extent as did the late great Swami Dayananda. He was impressed greatly by the '*Jñānakānda*' of the Upaniṣads. The universalism of Vivekananda reminded one of the catholic culture of Aśoka. He had been brought up under the influence of his teacher Ramakrishna whose whole personality was a demonstration and vindication of the inherent spiritual truths in all the various religions.

He defined religion as the vital and moral force which gives life to a person or to a nation.[6] In thundering words he said, 'Strength is life, weakness is death'. Jawaharlal Nehru in his *The Discovery of India* has pointed out that the great refrain of Vivekananda's teachings was *abhayam*, (fearlessness). The Mundakopaniṣad says '*nāyamātmā balahīnena labhyaḥ.*' Vivekananda wanted to make a harmonious fusion of the Kshatriya manhood and Brahmana intellectualism. He shunned all weakening mysteries. Melamed in his *Spinoza and Buddha* wants to differentiate between Hebraism and Hinduism and says that the former is individualistic, theistic, optimistic and presents an anthropocentric view of the world. As distinct from it, the latter is universalistic, pessimistic, cosmocentric and world-negating. These generalizations are born out of a superficial study of Indian history and philosophy. The creators of Mauryan imperialism and Maratha polity were not vague sentimentalists. Vivekananda, although a monist, always stood for vigorous and valiant action in the secular sphere and heroically inculcated that absolute bravery and firm, bold faith could create history.

Vedantism and Ethics

European critics level the charge against Indian philosophy of being indifferent to ethics. Dr. A. B. Keith has the boldness to say: 'In comparison with the intellectual activity of the Brāhmaṇas the ethical content of the Upaniṣads must be said to be negligible and valueless.... they (the Brāhmaṇas) have completely failed to see that morality is the most objective and essential part of philosophy'.[7] But Vivekananda and Ram Tirtha have pointed out in their American lectures that the Vedantic metaphysic which teaches spiritual equality[8] is the real guarantee of an equal treatment to the vast masses of men. The French Revolution taught liberty and equality, but it degenerated into the despotic imperialisms of Napoleons I and III. After all, genuine ethics and social morality are meant for good behaviour and the development of freedom, right self-consciousness and good in the world. The Vedantic metaphysics does not neutralize the subjective disposition to ethical life because of its *Māyāvāda* but strengthens moral action by providing to that a rock-like spiritual foundation.

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[6] In heroic words Vivekananda declared: 'But this is not the time with us to weep, even in joy; we have had weeping enough; no more is this the time for us to become soft. This softness has been with us till we have become like masses of cotton.... *What our country now wants are muscles of iron and nerves of steel, gigantic wills, which nothing can resist*, which.... will accomplish their purpose in any fashion, even if it meant going down to the bottom of the ocean and meeting death face to face. That is what we want, and that can only be created, established, and strengthened, by understanding and realizing the ideal of the Advaita, that ideal of the oneness of all. Faith, faith, faith in ourselves.... If you have faith in the three hundred and thirty millions of your mythological gods, and in all the gods which foreigners.... have introduced into your midst, and still have no faith in yourselves, there is no salvation for you. Have faith in yourselves and stand up on that faith.... Why is it that we, three hundred and thirty millions of people, have been ruled for the last thousand years by any and every handful of foreigners?.... Because they had faith in themselves and we had not....' (From the lecture, "The Mission of the Vedanta") *Works*, Vol. III. p. 190.

[7] A. B. Keith: *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishad*, pp. 584-585.

Vivekananda's Contribution to World Thought

Vivekananda advocated the monism of the Upaniṣads as systematized by Bādarāyaṇa and Śaṁkara. The ever-conscient blissful reality was to him the supreme existent and the eternal real and could be realized as a result of philosophic thinking and living. The world, according to the view of Śaṁkara, is the '*vivarta*' of Brahma, (cp. Spinoza's theory of 'modes' of one infinite, eternal, immutable, self-subsistent, substance, God). But Vivekananda did not wholly deny the reality of the cosmos, although he was bound to do so philosophically. He was inspired by his great teacher who believed in the 'Motherhood of the governing principle of Universe', a Tantric doctrine and formula, which in its incipient forms is also found in the religious systems of the ancient Indus valley and Western Asia.

Vivekananda had a peculiar theory of evolution which has been supposed to supplement the Darwinian formula. 'The Swami, though admitting Darwin's theory to be sound enough to a certain extent, assailed it with a greater theory, that of Patanjali's "filling in of nature", (जात्यन्तर परिणाम: प्रकृत्यापूरात्) which,' he showed, 'offered the ultimate solution of the causes of evolution.'[9] He pointed out that the Darwinian analysis fitted in well on the lower plane, but on the higher plane, moral factors had a great hand in giving to man his birthright of perfection and eternal salvation.

Vivekananda's epistemological analysis follows the orthodox Vedantic formula. He pointed out that all the knowledge that we receive from outside is not any external addition, but simply the occasion for the removal of obstacles so that the innate pure consciousness may shine in all its resplendence and luminosity.[10]

William James has referred to the introduction of the concept of the 'superconscious' in modern psychology by Vivekananda.[11] According to the Swami, religion arises when a person tries to advance beyond his normal cognitive faculties. Hence we find that Gautama Buddha also stated that transcendental truths had been revealed to him under the sacred Bodhi tree. Kant also says that religion is 'a postulate of reason' (reason not in the psychic individual sense but in the cosmic universal sense). St. Augustine, Dante, and Goethe declare that the religious consciousness is a fact emerging in response to the sense of the Infinite which is immanent in man. In the Christian concept of incarnation — which signified the union of spirit and matter — Hegel found the example of the absolute religion. But to Vivekananda, the *Satchidānanda Brahman* was a superior category than this Hegelian incarnation. Kant and Hegel (in their religious philosophy) stopped with a per-

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[8] समं सर्वेषु भूतेषु तिष्ठन्तं परमेश्वरम्
विनश्यत्स्वविनश्यन्तं य: पश्तति स पश्यति ॥
समं पश्यन्हि सर्वत्र समवस्थितमीश्वरम्
न हिनस्त्यात्मनात्मानं ततो याति परां गतिम् ॥
(B.G. : XIII/27-28.)

[9] For details see *Life of Vivekananda*, Vol. 2, p. 747.

[10] This theory has a resemblance to the theory of Leibniz. Bertrand Russell : *Philosophy of Leibniz*. p. 158 : 'Leibniz explains that when he says truths are innate, he does not mean simply that the mind has the faculty of knowing them, but that it has the faculty of finding them in itself. Everything we know is developed out of our own nature, that is, it is obtained by reflection, by rendering conscious the perceptions which before were unconscious'.

[11] R. D. Ranade, *A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy* (Poona, 1926), p. 139.

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sonal God. Hegel criticised the undifferentiated substantial Absolute of Schelling and said, 'It was shot from a pistol'. In the *Nyāya-Muktāvali* and in the works of Rāmānuja we find a criticism of the predicateless impersonalistic Absolute. But Vivekananda believed in the Absolute on the basis of the mystic realizations of the great teachers and realized that himself. Śaṁkara also says—

"दिग्देशगुणगतिफलभेदशून्यं हि परमार्थसत् अद्वयं ब्रह्म मन्दबुद्धीनामसदिवप्रतिभाति"
(Bhāṣya on *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 8. 1. 1).

Vivekananda said that unity was the supreme truth,[12] but to arrive at that point the stages of dualism and of modified monism had to be passed through. Sri Aurobindo also accepts this view-point: 'Their (of *dvaita*, *viśiṣṭādvaita* and *advaita*) co-existence, difficult of conception to the logical intellect can be experienced by identity in consciousness'. (*The Īśa Upaniṣad*, p. 30). But the difference between the standpoints of Aurobindo and Vivekananda is that the latter did not accept their co-existence but believed in the sublation of the dualistic and the modified monistic view-points when the monistic vision would dawn.

Vivekananda's Sociology

Vivekananda was fundamentally a man of religion and philosophy. He was not a mere sociologist and hence he could not make any great contribution to the analytical and conceptional side of social sciences.[13] He wanted, however, to work out a radical reconstruction of society.[14] Sometimes he wanted to offer a sociological interpretation of some aspects of Indian history[15] by calling attention to the protracted conflict between the Brahmanas and the Kshatriyas. Although several radical social thinkers are greatly influenced by the Marxian gospel of class struggle and the dictatorship of the proletariat, the social order, based on a functional organization of the people, as crystallized in the 'four classes' of Hinduism has found able defenders in Dayananda, Vivekananda and Aurobindo, as one capable of harmonizing the spiritual, intellectual, protective, economic and social activities of men. Vivekananda did not give us a clear-cut social programme.[16] Nevertheless, he mercilessly condemned the iniquities of the caste system and untouchability. It is evident that if he would have lived long to see the great convulsion in the country, his powerful feelings for the redemption of the exploited masses would have compelled him to advance in the direction of a radical social reconstruction.[17] But it is definite that he could certainly never tolerate the social laxities prevalent today in the name of social freedom. To that extent he would have been a conservative. He seems to have believed in the betterment and liberation of the individual first, before the society could be improved.[18] Fascist and communistic regimentation, to the contrary, kill the creative instincts of man and totalitarian armed collectivism seems to stand against natural organic evolution of the individual. The recorded history of the world shows that so long history has been the biography of a few individuals and the elite, hence I would urge that the mass society should now assert itself through the mechanism of representative democracy. This would be in consonance with the moral and spiritual idealism of Vivekananda.

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[12] Vivekananda emphatically stated that modern scientific theories were vindicating the Vedantic concept of unity. It can be pointed out, however, that while Vedantism proceeds on the basis of intuitions, science is experimental in its methodology.

[13] He denounced any personal connexion with politics and once made the remark: '"India is immortal," he said "if she persists in her search for God. But if she goes in for politics and social conflict, she will die".' (Miss MacLeod repeated these words to R. Rolland. *The Life of Vivekananda*, by R. Rolland, p. 169).

[14] He is reported to have advocated intermarriage between castes and subcastes for the promotion of social solidarity. (Rolland, *The Life of Vivekananda*, p. 137).

[15] cp. Max Weber's Sociological thesis.

[16] Once Vivekananda declared that he was a 'socialist' and denounced the caste prejudices and malices of the Smriti and the Puranas.—B. N. Datta, *Swami Vivekananda—Patriot-Prophet*, pp. 369-70.

[17] Vivekananda's burning enthusiasm for the redemption of the oppressed is evident in these lines: 'I do not care whether they are Hindus, or Mohammedans or Christians, but those that love the Lord will always command my service. Plunge into the fire, my children... Everything will come to you, if you only have faith... Let each one of us pray day and night for the downtrodden millions in India, who are held fast by poverty, priestcraft and tyranny—pray day and night for them... I am no metaphysician, no philosopher, nay, no saint. I am poor, I love the poor... Who feels in India for the two hundred millions of men and women sunken for ever in poverty and ignorance? Where is the way out?... Who will bring the light to them? Let these people be your God.... Him I call a Mahatman (great soul) whose heart bleeds for the poor.... So long as the millions live in hunger and ignorance, I hold every man a traitor, who having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them! ...' (*The Life of the Swami Vivekananda*, Chapter 83. Letter to his Indian disciples about 1894-1895).

Vivekananda as the Hero-Prophet

Vivekananda's heroic gospel is summarized in the following remarks of his and these show the dominant elements of his powerful personality. 'I know that truth alone gives life, and nothing but going towards reality will make us strong and none will reach truth until he is strong. . . Strength is the medicine for the world's disease. Strength is the medicine which the poor must have when tyrannised over by the rich. . . nothing gives such strength as the idea of Monism. Nothing makes us so moral as the idea of Monism.'[19] Hence we find that many great men in India have been influenced by his personality and teachings. Swami Rama Tirtha, an apostle of Neo-Vedantism who also thundered in Egypt, Japan, and America, was deeply inspired by him. Subhas Chandra Bose recognized Vivekananda as his spiritual teacher. Aurobindo was a great admirer of him and read his works in his younger days. Swami Satyadeo owed allegiance to him. Dr. Radhakrishnan testifies that the enthusiasm and eloquence of Vivekananda in defence of Hinduism have deeply touched him.[20] Mahatma Gandhi went to see him in Belur Math, but could not meet him as the Swami was then ill. (Gandhiji was then an obscure man, about the year 1901). Jawaharlal has showered praises on the Swami in his book *The Discovery of India.*

The profoundness of the personality of the Swami is unchallenged. The 'Song of the Sannyasin' is a great legacy of the saint and mystic, and Yogi. The Swami was a world Teacher, but he was also the child of India. His dedication to the cause of Āryavarta was supreme.[21] His *Lectures from Colombo to Almora* is the Gita of the present day meant to rouse millions of tāmasic Arjunas to hard work and puissant vigour.

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[18] In autumn 1895 he wrote to Abhayananda: 'Individuality is my motto, I have no ambition beyond training individuals.' (Quoted in R. Rolland, *The Life of Vivekananda,* p. 79n). He also once declared, 'one single man contains within himself the whole universe.' (*Ibid.*)

[19] *Complete Works of Vivekananda,* Vol. 2.

[20] See his article in the book, *Religion in Transition.*

[21] Romain Rolland, *The Life of Vivekananda* (Almora, 1953), 4th impression, p. 7, says: 'From his ashes, like those of the Phoenix of old, has sprung anew the conscience of India — the magic bird — faith in her unity and in the Great Message, brooded over from Vedic times by the dreaming spirit of his ancient race — the message for which it must render account to the rest of mankind.'

What you want is character, strengthening of the will. . . . He who has nothing to desire for himself, whom does he fear, and what can frighten him? What fear has death for him? What fear has evil for him?

* * * *

Strength and manliness are virtue; weakness and cowardice are sin. Independence is virtue; dependence is sin. Loving others is virtue; hating others is sin. Faith in God and in one's own self is virtue; doubt is sin.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND SOCIAL REFORM

BIMLA PRASAD

[Dr. Bimla Prasad, M.A. (Patna), PH.D. (Columbia) is Professor of History, Patna University. In this beautiful and thought provoking paper he brings out Swamiji's ideas about social reform and the method, he had delineated in his teachings, to bring it about. Further, Dr. Prasad describes forcefully what was really meant by Swamiji when he talked of reform. —*Ed.*]

Swami Vivekananda, it need hardly be said, was one of the greatest builders of Modern India and his views on various matters deserve careful study. So far as his views on social reform are concerned, they have not yet been systematically studied. It is of course generally known that he stood for the reform of the Hindu society and for the uplift of the masses, but to know this is not to know the whole story. Bhupendranath Datta does deal with this subject,[1] but his objective is not so much to present a systematic account of the views of Swami Vivekananda on the various aspects of social reform, as to prove that he was not opposed to such reform and was in fact a socialist and social revolutionary. His views on the need for the uplift of the masses are given due attention here, but those on the question of social reform come only for brief mention. Yet a perusal of the Swami's writings and speeches would show that he had given much thought to this question and had developed a distinct outlook of his own, which found repeated expression in his usual, forceful language. What follows is an attempt to present an analytical study of this outlook.

At the outset it may be pointed out that Swami Vivekananda understood fully the need for the reform of the Hindu society. He expressed his full agreement with the view of the educated classes in India that a thorough overhauling of society was necessary.[2] The basis of this overhauling was to be the freedom of the individual. Liberty, he again and again said, was the first condition of growth. Just as man must have liberty to think and speak, so he must have liberty in food, dress, and other things so long as he did not injure others. Therefore, he gave the slogan: 'No priestcraft, no social tyranny.'[3] Freedom in all matters, physical, mental and spiritual, he wrote on another occasion, was the worthiest gain and the supreme prize of man. Those social rules which stood in the way of such freedom should be considered injurious and steps taken to destroy them speedily. On the other hand encouragement should be given to those institutions which enabled men to advance on the path of freedom.[4] Thus it is clear that Swami Vivekananda stood for a society which gave freedom to all its members. But he had his own method of working for this ideal. It is here that he differed from his contemporaries in the field of social reform. 'To the reformers,' he declared, 'I will point out that I am a greater reformer than any one of them. They want to reform only little bits. I want root-and-branch reform. Where we differ is in the method.'[5]

These differences in the method were several. In the first place, Swami Vivekananda thought that the method of the other reformers was one of destruction while his own was that of construction. Explaining this difference he affirmed, 'I do not believe in reform; I believe in growth.'[6] At another place he said that it was very easy to break down; a maniac could break anything he liked, but it would be hard for him to build up anything. Fanatics who stood for destruction might do some good, according to their light, but much more harm. For social institutions are not made in a day and to change them means removing the cause. If there is an evil, denouncing it will not remove it. But if one works at the root, first finds out the cause of that evil and then removes it, the effect will also be removed.[7] Therefore, instead of denouncing the evils in the Hindu society he took the position that this society was not bad, but good, only he wanted it to be better still.[8]

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[1] Bhupendranath Datta, *Swami Vivekananda, Patriot-Prophet* (Calcutta: Nababharat Publishers, 1954).

[2] 'A Plan of Work for India', 1895, *The Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* (Calcutta: Advaita Ashrama, 1957; 8 Volumes), IV, p. 371.

[3] 'To My Brave Boys', 1894, *Ibid.*, p. 367.

[4] 'Letter to a Bengali Lady', 1898, *Works*, V, p. 110.

[5] 'My Plan of Campaign', 1897, *Works*, III, p. 213.

[6] *Ibid.*

Swami Vivekananda advanced several arguments in favour of his plea to do away with denunciation as a method for bringing about social reform. People, he pointed out, had had enough lectures and papers on the evils in their society; what they were looking for then was a man who had real love and sympathy for them and would drag them out of the difficulty. Besides, denunciation had served no purpose except to fill the land with 'a most vituperative, a most condemnatory literature.' The reformers had condemned the orthodox and the orthodox had retaliated in the same language. The result had been the creation of a literature in every vernacular of India which was 'the shame of the race, the shame of the country.' Swami Vivekananda asked: 'Is this reform? Is this leading the nation to glory? Whose fault is this?'[9] He of course implied that the fault was with the reformers.

His chief argument against denunciation, however, was nationalistic. He was too much of a patriot to think of denouncing his country or his society even for reforming it. Reforms had to be championed, but in such a way as not to lessen the pride of the people in their country. 'If there are holes in this national ship, this society of ours,' he declared, 'we are its children. Let us go and stop the holes. Let us gladly do it with our heart's blood; and if we cannot, then let us die. We will make a plug of our brains and put them into the ship, but condemn it, never. Say not one harsh word against this society.'[10]

Swami Vivekananda's opposition to the propaganda carried on by Christian missionaries and other foreigners was equally strong and based on similar grounds. He of course admitted that the Hindu society was not perfect and that various defects had crept into it, but this in his opinion, did not entitle foreigners to run it down, for there were defects in other countries also, in some cases of a more serious nature. 'If, foreign friends,' he declared, 'you come up with genuine sympathy to help and not to destroy, Godspeed to you. But if by abuses, incessantly hurled against the head of a prostrate race in season and out of season, you mean only the triumphant assertion of the moral superiority of your own nation, let me tell you plainly, if such a comparison be instituted with any amount of justice, the Hindu will be found head and shoulders above all other nations in the world as a moral race.'[11]

Just as social reform had to be championed without affecting the people's pride in their country and society, so, according to Swami Vivekananda, care had also to be taken not to tamper with their religion. For religion was 'the centre, the keynote of the whole music of national life' in India and if India threw it off, it would die as a nation. Everything in India had to be worked through the vitality of religion and social reform had to be preached by showing how much more spiritual a life the new system would bring.[12] The failure to perceive this had been the chief cause of the failure of the efforts of the Hindu social reformers of the nineteenth century. Swami Vivekananda thought that in their haste they had laid all the evils in the Hindu society at the door of religion. Like the man in the story, wanting to kill the mosquito that sat on a friend's forehead, they had been trying to deal such heavy blows as would have killed man and mosquito together; but fortunately they had not succeeded and had only dashed themselves against immovable rocks. Their efforts, however, had not been in vain, for they had administered the necessary shock to the society to rouse it from slumber. People should thank these noble and unselfish souls and learn the proper lesson from their experience.[13] The question of destruction of religion should not arise, for such destruction was not necessary in order to reform the Hindu society. The evils in society had cropped up not on account of religion, but because religion had not been applied to society as it should have been.[14]

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[7] 'Maya and the Evolution of the Conception of God', 1896, *Works*, II, p. 116.

[8] 'A Plan of Work for India' *Works*, IV, p. 371.

[9] 'My Plan of Campaign', 1897, *Works*, III, p. 215.

[10] *Ibid.*, p. 227.

[11] 'Reply to the Madras Address', 1894, *Works*, IV, p. 345.

[12] 'My Plan of Campaign', 1897, *Works*, III, p. 220.

If social reform was not to be at the cost of religion, religion also was not to be used to impede social reform. Swami Vivekananda's view was that the Hindu must not give up his religion, but must keep religion within its proper limits and give freedom to society to grow.[15] The work, as he saw it, was to make 'a European society with India's religion.'[16] Explaining this idea he wrote, 'Can you become an occidental of occidentals in your spirit of equality, freedom, work and energy, and at the same time a Hindu to the very backbone in religious culture and instincts? This is to be done and we will do it.'[17] The start had to be made on religious grounds and no radical social reforms had to be preached in the beginning. The society was to be revived on the old grounds of universal salvation and equality.[18]

Swami Vivekananda agreed with those who contended that religion had nothing to do with social reform, but insisted that religion had also no business to formulate social laws and insist on the difference between one person and another. According to him, it had been a terrible mistake for religion to interfere in social matters. But having done so it was now hypocritical to say that social reform was not the business of religion. The rule that religion has to do only with the soul and has no business to interfere in social matters must be applied also to the mischief which had already been done. Otherwise the situation would be similar to the case of a man who after forcibly taking possession of another's property cries through the nose when that man tries to regain it and preaches the doctrine of the sanctity of human right. What business, asked Swami Vivekananda, had the priests to interfere (to the misery of millions of human beings) in every social matter?[19] The implication was that in order to undo the mischief done in the past, religion must take a hand in social reform in modern times.

The need of the hour, however, as Swami Vivekananda saw it, was not to insist on particular items of reform, but to awaken the people and leave them free to decide what reforms they wanted. His whole ambition in life, he explained, was to set in motion a machinery which would bring noble ideas to the door of all men and women and then let them settle their own fate. In particular they were to be made aware of what their forefathers as well as other nations had thought on the most momentous questions of the day and what others were doing then. 'We are to put the chemicals together, the crystallization will be done by nature according to her laws.'[20] In his opinion it was wrong, a thousand times wrong, for any one to feel or say that he would work out the salvation of others. 'I am asked again and again,' he declared, 'what I think of the widow problem and what I think of the woman question. Let me answer once for all — am I a widow that you ask me that nonsense? Am I a woman that you ask me that question again and again? Who are you to solve women's problems? Are you the Lord God that you should rule over every widow and every woman? Hands off! They will solve their own problems.'[21]

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[13] 'Reply to the Madras Address', 1894, *Works*, IV, p. 347.

[14] 'Epistles', 1894, *Works*, V, p. 37.

[15] 'Epistles', 1893, *Ibid.*, p. 19.

[16] 'To My Brave Boys', 1894, *Works*, IV, p. 387.

[17] 'Epistles', 1894, *Works*, V, p. 26.

[18] 'To My Brave Boys', *op. cit.*

[19] 'What We Believe In', 1894, *Works*, IV, pp. 358-9.

[20] 'Epistles', 1894, *Works*, V, p. 25.

According to Swami Vivekananda, to talk of social reform before the awakening of the people was to put the cart before the horse. For who would bring about reform? The Government could not make a move in the absence of a healthy, strong public opinion in favour of reform. But it would take time for such an opinion to develop and until this happened the country would have to wait. 'The tyranny of a minority,' Swami Vivekananda declared, 'is the worst tyranny that the world ever sees. A few men who think that certain things are evil will not make a nation move. Why does not the nation move? First educate the nation, create your legislative body, and then the law will be forthcoming. First create the power, the sanction from which the law will spring.'[22] Therefore, instead of frittering away their energies on ideal reforms which would never become practical, Indians should go to the root of the evil and educate the people so that they might be able to solve their own problems. The new order of things was the salvation of the people by the people, and it would take time to make it workable, especially in India, which had always in the past been governed by kings.[23]

By the word 'people' here Swami Vivekananda really meant the people, the overwhelming majority of whom were poor and illiterate and not just the men of the middle classes. 'The one thing that is at the root of all evil in India,' he emphasized, 'is the condition of the poor.'[24] On another occasion he exhorted his friends to remember that the nation lived in the cottage and prescribed as their motto 'Sympathy for the poor, the downtrodden, even unto death.'[25] He looked at the problem of social reform from the point of view of the masses and did not show much interest in those reforms which did not touch them. This was one of the chief reasons for his lack of interest in the contemporary movement for social reform. He found that all that the champions of the latter meant by social reform was either widow remarriage or female emancipation, or something of that sort. These would touch only the people of the higher castes and not the masses who already had them. This, in his opinion, was not reform, but a form of selfishness on the part of the educated people who wanted somehow to cleanse their own house and keep it tidy and let others go from bad to worse.[26]

Swami Vivekananda admitted that such reforms might do good to a few, but contended that they would not be of much avail to the whole nation.[27] Referring to the movement for widow remarriage he once remarked, 'Of course, I am a sympathizer in every reform, but the fate of a nation does not depend upon the number of husbands their widows get, but upon the condition of the masses.'[28] Such reforms he described as ornamental and asked people to work for real reformation, which was the uplift of the masses through education. This would be a slow process, but a sure one. 'You must go down to the basis of the thing,' he said 'to the very root of the matter. That is what I call radical reform. Put the fire there and let it burn upwards and make an Indian nation. And the solution of the problem is not so easy, as it is a big and a vast one. Be not in a hurry, this problem has been known several hundred years.'[29]

To sum up, it is clear from the above that Swami Vivekananda had a distinct philosophy of his own on social reform. He agreed with the view of the educated Indians of his day that there was need for a thorough overhauling of the Hindu Society, but differed from them with regard to the method for bringing this

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[21] 'Vedanta and Its Application to Indian Life', *Works*, III, p. 246.

[22] 'My Plan of Campaign', 1897, *op. cit.*, pp. 215-6.

[23] 'Interview to the Hindu', 1897, *Works*, V, p. 145.

[24] 'Our Duty to the Masses', 1894, *Works*, IV, p. 362.

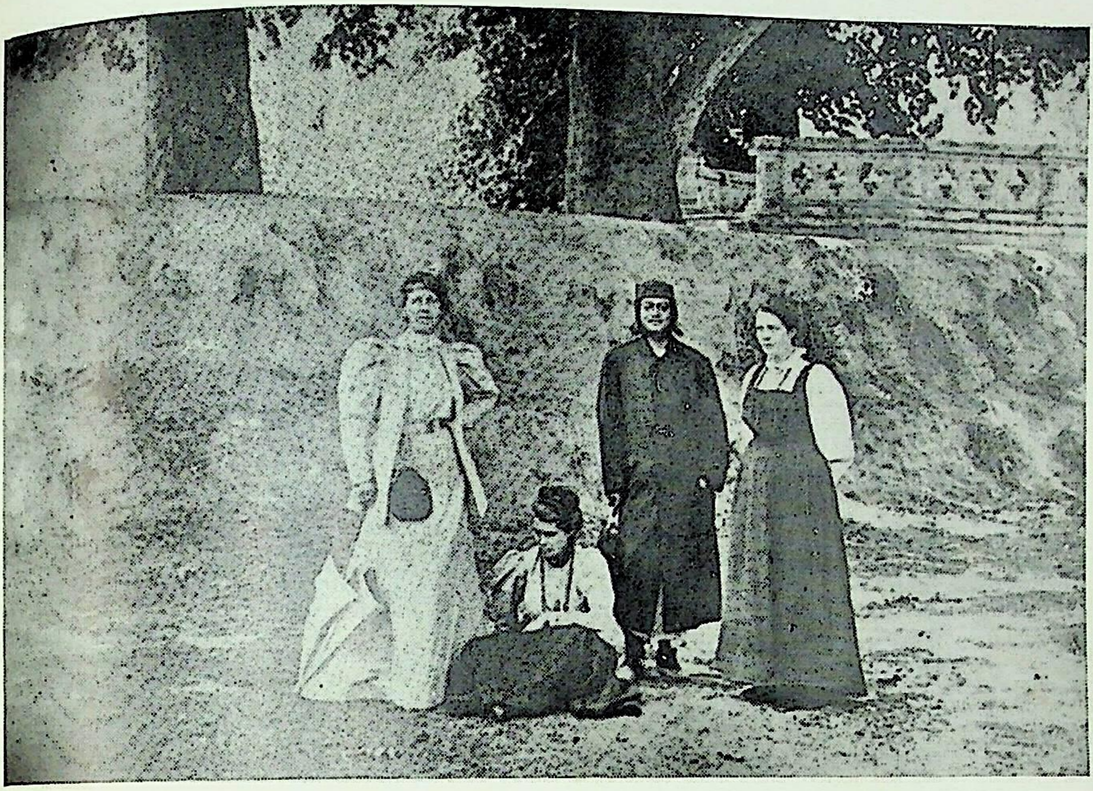
[25] 'Epistles', 1894, *Works*, V, pp. 25-6.

[26] 'Conversations and Dialogues', 1898, *Works*, V, p. 249.

[27] *Ibid.*

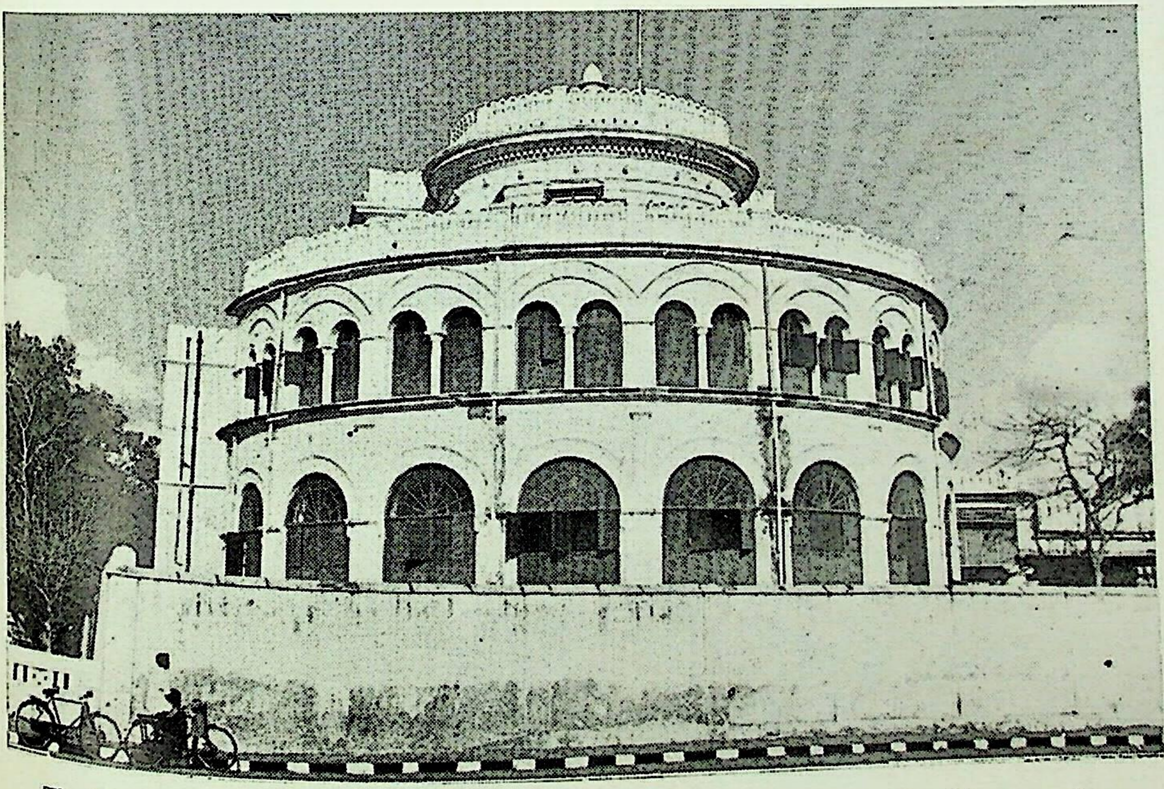
[28] 'Epistles', 1894, *Works*, V, pp. 25-6.

[29] 'My Plan of Campaign', 1897, *op cit.*

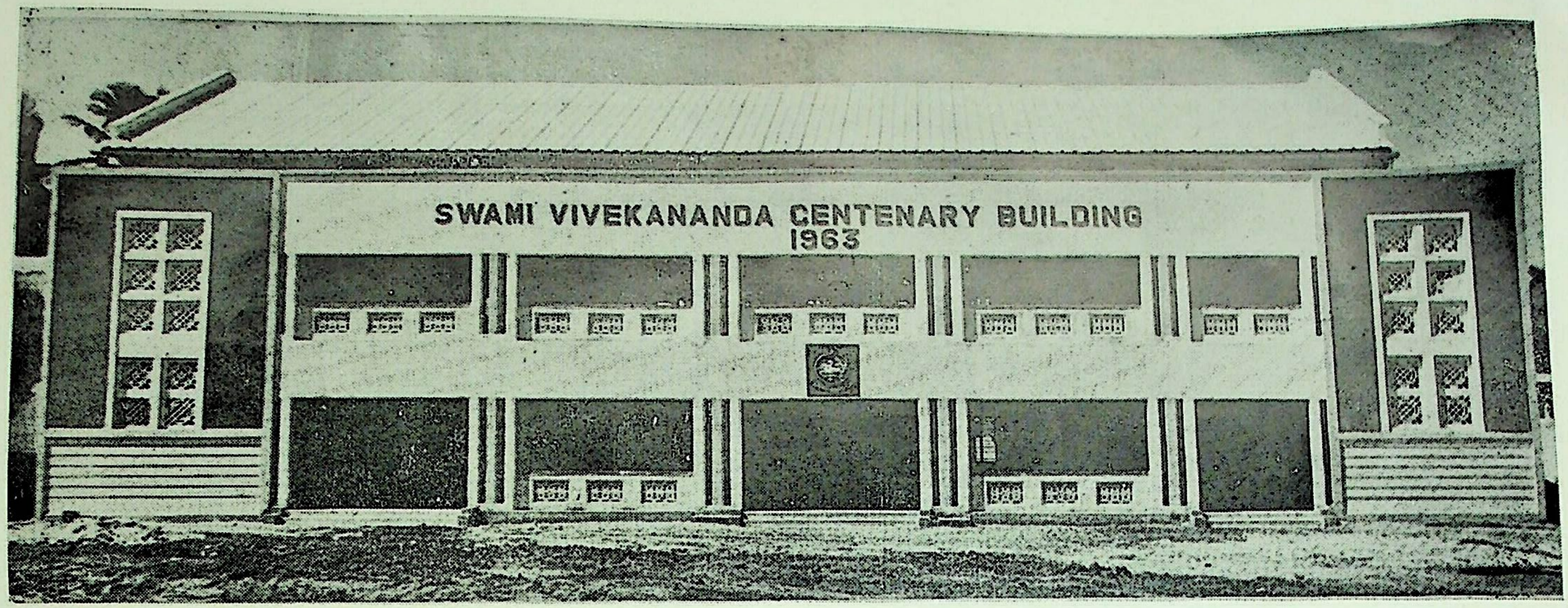


(KASHMIR 1898)

Standing: (L to R) (1) Miss J. MacLeod, (2) Swami Vivekananda, (3) Sister Nivedita.
Sitting: Mrs. Ole Bull.



The House in Madras where Swami Vivekananda stayed for a few days, after his return from the West, in 1897. Formerly known as Ice House, it has been now re-named Vivekananda House.


SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY BUILDING
1963

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY BUILDING, AT SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MYLAPORE, MADRAS.

(This newly constructed building will house the Sri Ramakrishna Centenary Library, a children's corner and a reading room on the ground floor and on the first floor it provides commodius space for a lecture hall.)

about. According to him the emphasis should be not on destruction but on construction, not even on reform as such but on growth. Denunciation of the society had to be avoided as it would result in mutual recrimination and would affect the pride of the people in their country. No attack should also be made on religion in the name of social reform. For religion was the soul of India's national life and if this was destroyed, India would die as a nation. On the other hand, religion should not be used to hamper the cause of social reform but should make its own contribution to it. This contribution, however, should be confined to bringing about awakening among the people so that they might decide for themselves what reforms they wanted and should not include insistence on particular reforms. Such reforms would have to wait till the people became awakened, otherwise the result would be the tyranny of the minority which was the worst tyranny of all. Here the word people meant the masses and not just the educated classes. Social reforms advocated by the latter did not touch the masses and hence would not be of much value from the point of view of the nation as a whole. Real reform would come from working at the root, among the masses, and making them enlightened and in a position to raise themselves through their own efforts. This would take time, but there is no other way.

THE LOVING HEART OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SISTER CHRISTINE

His compassion for the poor and downtrodden, the defeated, was a passion. One did not need be told, but seeing him one knew that he would willingly have offered his flesh for food and his blood for drink to the hungry. To this day his birthday is celebrated by feeding the poor. The downtrodden, the outcasts are on this day served by Brahmins and Kayasthas, young men of the highest castes. To those in the West it is impossible to convey the significance of such service. Caste and outcaste! Who but a Vivekananda could bring about this relationship so unobtrusively? No arguments regarding caste and the depressed classes. Nothing but heart and devotion. So even in small things while he was still in America. Thus, when asked why he was taking French lessons, he said in confusion, 'This is the only way M.L. can keep from starving.' Thrusting a ten dollar bill into the hand of another he said, 'Give this to S...., do not say it is from me.' When one of the group, a weak brother, was accused of juggling with the Vedanta Society's money, he said, 'I will make good any deficiency.' Then the matter was dropped and he said to one of the others, 'I do not know where I could have found the money to make up the loss, but I could not let the poor suffer.'

Even after he left America, he still had great concern for those he left behind, who found life a great struggle. Especially did he feel for 'women with men's responsibilities'. Asked whether he endorsed a certain woman who was going about the country as a religious teacher and using his name and reputation to get a following, he said 'Poor thing! She has a husband to support, and she must get a certain amount every month.' 'But Swami,' someone said, 'she claims to be authorised by you to prepare students for your teaching. Should she be allowed to mislead people, take their money, and use your name?' All that he said was, 'Poor thing! Poor thing! Shiva! Shiva!' With this 'Shiva! Shiva!' he put the matter out of his mind. We knew that he had reminded himself of his true nature, in which everything of a disquieting nature was dissolved.

(From *The Reminiscences of Swami Vivekananda*)

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA THE PROPHET OF STRENGTH AND FEARLESSNESS

P. NAGARAJA RAO

[Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao, M.A., D.Litt., is Reader in Philosophy, Sri Venkateswara University College, Tirupati. Readers of *Vedanta Kesari* are familiar with his writings as he has been a regular contributor, for some years. Swamiji's message of strength which he succinctly presents, forms the subject of his article. — *Ed.*]

Swami Vivekananda represents the best of India's philosophical wisdom and the knowledge of the modern West. He combines in himself half a dozen roles, all of them grounded in his deep spirituality. He was a great interpreter of the East to the West, a builder of the bridge between the two worlds, a patriot, an educationist and a social reformer. What impressed the West most is his dynamic personality. One is struck by the largeness of his features, broad strong nose, full expressive lips, dark luminous eyes, handsome bronze face, the watchful gleam of his eyes, the splendid robe that best suited him, his musical voice and above all his easy, quiet but assured air of command. He was a unique personality from the East.

Early in his life he was a student of Western thought, and was deeply read in Western metaphysics. Along with his desire for knowledge, there was a deep unrest in him yearning for spiritual experience. He was a member of the Brahmo Samaj which attempted to modernise Hinduism, but did not satisfy Vivekananda. It is the firsthand experience of spiritual life and the direct transmission of the experience by his Master, Ramakrishna, that made Vivekananda the cyclonic Hindu, the devoted apostle and the radiant monk of practical Vedanta. What St. Paul did for Christ, Swamiji did for his Master. His triumphant visit to Chicago, to attend and address the Parliament of Religions, is a historic day in the history of Hinduism. The bell-like music of his voice and the mysterious vibrations made an indelible impression on the Americans. He received thunderous applause from all. When he uttered the words 'Brothers and Sisters', it was no mere oratorical phrase, or a diplomatic policy utterance. It was a deeply felt and sincerely believed simple truth born out of the fullness of his realization. It is this divine fact that was responsible for the impression it made on the minds of men.

In his life of 39 years, the first eighteen he spent in his study. He met his Master when he was 18 and after his spiritual experience, he wandered for over seven years all over India, including the Himalayas and obtained first hand experience of the dire needs of India and the sorry plight of her masses. He hated superstition, backwardness, and all the social ills of our land and determined to fight them all. He loved India and believed that she had a message to the world. He was no narrow nationalist, nor was he a vague internationalist. He believed that India should give the world, the non-dogmatic, rational, scientific and humanistic religion of Vedanta and in return learn the ways of industrial efficiency, technological progress, and scientific advancement. He stood for an exchange of values. He made this determination on the rock (named after him now) at *Kanyakumari* in 1893. He stayed, in all four years, in America and three months in England. He started as many as five centres of Vedanta in America.

His writings have been a source of infinite inspiration to all subsequent renascent Hindu thinkers, like Gandhiji, Aurobindo, etc. 'There has been no single self-sacrificing Indian worker who has not been influenced more or less by his thoughts, words and example.' Swami Vivekananda's philosophy is the living religion of the Hindus, Vedanta. He declared to the world that the Ultimate Reality is One Existence, which is *Existence-Consciousness* and *Bliss* (Sat, Chit and Ananda). Spirit is Ultimate Reality. The world of souls and matter are the manifestation of the spirit ; from the movement of atoms to the happenings in history, all is governed by the spirit. The human being is essentially divine and is the 'unprisoned splendour' encased in a body. The human being is not a creature tied down to a body of lust without any glimmer of divinity. It is the feeling that we are all separate, the ignorance of the fundamental oneness of Reality, and the illusion of difference, that is responsible for all our conflict, tragedy, competition and selfish individualism. To get rid of it we need to realize the divine nature in us. It is not a travel to another sphere. It is a transforming experience that brings about the realization of our oneness with all (*Sarvātmabhāva*). Such a religion is the need of the age. 'Religion is realization ; temples, Churches, books and forms are simply the kindergarten of religion, to make the spiritual child strong enough to take higher steps.'

Further, he declared that all religions of the world are agreed on fundamentals. They all look upon men as brothers. What has brought religion into disrepute is its bad practical record, e.g. wars, inquisition, forced conversion and the proclamation that each religion is the exclusive and complete disclosure of truth. It is this denominational, dogmatic and sectarian claim that has made one religion fight with another. Swamiji declared in his Chicago speech, 'Sectarianism, bigotry and its horrible descendent, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth. They have filled the earth with violence, drenched it often and often with human blood, destroyed civilizations and sent whole nations to despair.' Throughout his teaching one finds Swamiji's clarion call is for a humanistic, man-making religion. He believed that man can best grow and integrate his personality by a right type of spiritual religion. Religion of the right-type is the best remedy for national integration and international peace. Religion should satisfy the mind and the heart of man, and his emotions. Religion is strength according to Swamiji. 'Strength is goodness, and weakness is sin. Infinite strength is religion.'

Religion must express itself in the service of humanity and imbibe the spirit of renunciation. Swamiji did not want religion to be taught to empty stomachs. The man of true religion must serve men who are the manifestations of God on earth. He must help them in all the walks of life. Service is worship. It is not a complacent act of condescension towards others. Service is an opportunity to worship the Lord in the poor, the illiterate, the ignorant, the afflicted. 'Let these be your Gods, know that service to these alone is the highest religion,' thundered Swamiji.

Swamiji reinterpreted the concept of *renunciation* (sannyasa). It is not giving up of all activities, and going to mountain tops and monasteries in search of individual salvation. It is not running away from social agonies into ivory towers. It is not freedom from action. It is freedom in action. It is not do-nothingism. It is a life of active service in the name of the Lord, giving up all selfish motives. It is nishkāma-karma. 'To be in the world and not be of it is the true test of renunciation.' True renunciation, Śankara equated with perfection. Renunciation makes service perfect. 'The givers are worshippers and the receivers are the divinity itself. Service is not to be tainted with either selfishness or feeling of compassion.'

Along with renunciation and service Swamiji stressed *tolerance*. Toleration is not a stroke of policy with the Hindus, but it is an article of their faith. Toleration is not negative. It is an active appreciation of the good in the others and the incorporation of the same with us. Swamiji declared, 'We Hindus do not merely tolerate, we unite ourselves with every religion, praying in the Mosque of the Mohammedans, worshipping before the fire of the Zoroastrian and kneeling before the cross of the Christian.' Swamiji believed in the *Fellow-*

ship of all Faiths. He declared 'I accept all religions that were in the past and worship them; I worship God with every one of them. . . . Is God's book finished, or is it still a continuous revelation going on? It is a marvellous book — these spiritual revelations of the world. The Bible, the Vedas, the Koran and all other sacred books are but so many pages and yet, an infinite number of pages remain yet to be unfolded. We stand in the present, but open ourselves to the infinite future. We take in all that has been in the past, enjoy the light of the present and open every window of the heart for all that will come in the future. Salutations to all the prophets of the past, to all the great ones of the present and to those that are to come in the future.'

Romain Rolland, the biographer, observes that the above passage is an eloquent commentary on the catholicity of the Swamiji's global outlook. Each religion emphasizes one or the other of the important aspects of human life. They do not contradict each other. They supplement and, are there to suit the different tastes and temperaments of men.

Swamiji loved India and looked upon India as the spiritual home of the nations of the world. Spirituality is India's message. She should reform and reconstruct her society and get rid of evils like untouchability, caste-system based on birth, weakness, superstition etc. but not by giving up her religion or her culture. She must keep the fire on the altar and remove the smoke. She must not make her past a fetter, but use it as an inspiring ideal.

Vivekananda stood for healthy social-reform based on the religion and the culture of India. He fought stoutly for the uplift of women and the masses. He declared 'the neglect of the masses spells our ruin'. Swamiji gave a practical shape to the spiritual ideals of Hinduism. He made Vedanta practical. Swamiji loved India and he brought home to the minds of us all, the glories of our heritage, her past follies, precarious present and her great future. He knew the importance of the economic well-being. He wanted India to learn from America four things: (a) great concern for the masses, (b) high status for education and freedom for women, (c) the power of scientific and technological organization, (d) their astounding capacity for work and the acquisition of material prosperity. Speaking about America in an important letter he writes, 'The Americans have their faults too; which nation has not? But this is my summing up. Asia laid the germs of civilization, Europe developed men, America is developing women and the masses. It is the paradise of women and the labourer.' Swamiji loved India and stood for an integral education to pull her up. He talked of a man-making education. He wanted India to draw the best from the rest of the world and still remain in the core essentially Indian.

Swamiji's clarion call is as fresh as it was when he gave it. It has a marked topicality today. 'Thou brave one, behold, take courage, feel proud that thou art an Indian and proudly proclaim, I am an Indian, every Indian is my brother. The Indian is my life, India's Gods and Goddesses are my God. India's society is the cradle of my infancy, the pleasure garden of my youth, the sacred heaven, the Varanasi of my old age. The soil of India is my highest heaven and the good of India is my good.'

Undisturbed and every steady direction of the mind and the heart to the Lord with an inseparable attachment is indeed the highest manifestation of man's love to God.

* * *

Love knows no bargaining. Wherever there is any seeking for something in return; there can be no real love; it becomes a mere matter of shop-keeping.

— SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND VEDANTA IN ITS MODERN APPLICATION

S. S. RAGHAVACHAR

[Prof. S. S. Raghavachar, M.A., Reader in Philosophy, University of Mysore, is also a scholar in Sanskrit and has translated some Dvaita and Vishishtadvaita texts into English. In this learned paper, he traces the development of Vedantic thought and the role Swami Vivekananda has played in its propagation in recent history, with particular reference to its application to every day life. —*Ed.*]

I

It is a privilege to be associated in some way with the celebration of the Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda. He is a star of the first magnitude in the cultural renaissance of Modern India and his powerful genius at once summed up the hoary wisdom of the ages and laid down lines for future progress and reconstruction. In addition to this profound significance of his personality to India, from the perspective of world-thought, his message represents a great force making for man's spiritual liberation. It is rewarding to dwell on this universal aspect of Vivekananda's life and principles.

II

For the student of Philosophy the first noteworthy fact is that the Swami was not merely a philosopher, a daring metaphysician of Vedantic Idealism, employing methods of logical analysis and speculative construction but also a monk, who renounced the life of worldliness and dedicated himself in ascetic completeness to the ideal of Vedanta. In him are combined philosophic thought and religious self-surrender. This is in the high tradition of Vedanta and the Swami constitutes a symbol of the philosophical heritage of Vedanta.

Whether this synthesis of philosophy and religion is a desirable feature is frequently debated and it strikes as an arresting phenomenon from the standpoint of European philosophy. European philosophy has descended from Greek thought, not particularly religious in its best periods, and European religion is Hebraic in origin and was not either philosophical or intellectual in its original formation. Since the culture of Europe had to struggle with these two divergent forces throughout its long history, it embodies a basically unresolved dualism. Hence a student of philosophy taking the pattern of Western culture as his standard is apt to be baffled by the synthesis of the two elements in Indian Culture. But the situation in Indian culture is radically different. Indian philosophy has always had a religious orientation in a general sense and Indian religion always functioned with a philosophical core in all its diverse formulations. Hence the synthesis appears profoundly natural and Swami Vivekananda appears as a historic representation of this unbroken tendency. He was a Vedantin *par excellence,* Vedanta being understood as a system of metaphysics and a life of complete dedication.

III

Vedanta, in the long history of its development, has passed through three determining periods. The first period was the period of the Upaniṣads when the sages like Yājñyavalkya and Uddālaka, brooding over the fundamental problems of reality and life, ascended to the brilliant insights recorded in the texts concerning the Ātman and Brahman and the final destiny of man. They shaped their utterances in the context of Vedic thought and brought to fulfilment the voyage of discovery registered in the Saṁhitas, Brāhmaṇas and Āraṇyakas. Their final outlook was the distilled essence of the entire Vedic endeavour towards the definition of the Real and the good.

The second great age of the Vedanta is dominated by Bādarāyaṇa and his commentators. The horizon of thought has widened by now and a variety of schools of philosophy have developed with varying degrees of hostility to the orthodox philosophy of the Upaniṣads. In this period Vedanta found a dominently intellectual reformulation entailing a critical valuation of the other schools of thought. Now the context of thought within which Vedanta was sought to be substantiated was the entire range of the philosophic systems of India, beginning with the Materialism of Chārvaka and ending with the ritualistic orthodoxy of Pūrva-mīmāmsa. Almost all the logically conceivable alternatives in philosophic construction are represented in these systems and an assertion of Vedanta in this climate of thought was the heroic achievement of the great Ācharyas of medieval India.

Swami Vivekananda is the central figure in the third crucial period of Vedanta. By now the placid Indian culture with its traditions and schools of thought is subjected to alien influences. The political and cultural influence of Islam produced manifold consequences. More recent and more vital was the impact of the West, with its religion, its philosophical movements, its social aspirations and experiments and its scientific and technological revolutions. The world of thought was immeasurably extended and it was a challenge to Vedanta to formulate itself in terms that could render it valid, in the vastly extended field of comparative thought. India's response to this new challenge is magnificently voiced forth in the message of Swami Vivekananda. He reaffirms the old insights, but in the context of the new field of all the currents of science, religion, philosophy and culture what was merely a school of Indian philosophy, however dominant, is, for the first time, set forth as a philosophy for the world with a full consideration of the bearings of all the major currents of world-thought. In short, the Swami placed Vedanta on the cultural map of the world, as a spiritual outlook, whose validity is enhanced rather than curtailed, by the vast extension of modern perspective.

IV

The central principle of Vedanta, according to Swami Vivekananda, is the Ātman. The Ātman is to be investigated both by an analysis of the individual subject and by that of the cosmic object. He contends that an analysis of the Individual, starting with the gross physical organism and passing through the sensory mechanism and the mind, ultimately arrives at the Self, which is self-revealing and unchanging. Such a transcendent spiritual principle is disclosed as presupposed by even the simplest act of perception. No other description of the subject would fit into even the ordinary acts of cognition. Similarly the philosophy of external nature must seek, and has been seeking, a unitary ground of the cosmic manifold. That ground cannot be materialistically conceived. In the first place the reality of pure matter is not proved. Even if it were proved, the problem of the emergence of consciousness out of a purely material base remains unsolved and insoluble. There is a necessity to re-interpret nature or matter in such a way that consciousness could arise out of it in the course of evolution. The only solution would lie in conceiving of nature as involved spirit or as consciousness struggling to manifest itself through a conquest of its own condition of degradation. Nature must be spiritualistically interpreted and be looked upon as the expression of a cosmic or absolute spirit. The next step is to see that there can be no two absolutes, a spirit in man and a spirit in nature and that the work of reason is incomplete until a final synthesis of ultimate principles is discovered. This bold final step Vedanta takes in its identification of the Ātman and Brahman, in the dictum of 'Tat-twamasi', the ultimate essence of man being affirmed as one in substance with the ultimate ground of the universe. This spiritual non-dualism is the eternal message of Vedanta, in Swami Vivekananda's interpretation. From this root-principle the Swami deduces a series of vital consequences bearing on the whole of life and thought.

V

In the first place it means that man's spiritual goal lies in the realization of this inherent divinity. Religion is no mere dogma or theory or ritual. It is a vital self-transformation or 'self-de-hypnotization' bringing out the infinite glory of the Brahman in the Ātman. Such a realization must signify a tremendous generation of power, for, truly the Ātman is infinite and all in all. Hence the characteristic teaching of the Swamiji that Spirituality is Strength and that Strength is the test of true realization. It also implies that genuine strength is spiritual and divine and is not to be confounded with brute physical might. This realization must be total and must be worked out through the utilization of all the resources of personality. Thus the Swamiji's gospel of the four yogas emerges doing justice to the emotional, ethical, mystical and intellectual trends of the various paths of spirituality. Marked is his emphasis on the ethical gospel of work. The Ātman is one and universal. To realize it as such means the realization of the unity of life in action, through selfless dedication to the cause of universal freedom and well-being. It also follows that from the plane of such realization, the divergent religions and cults lose their separatist claims to absolute truth and will be viewed as so many approaches to a unitary and all-inclusive goal. Traditions may be many but the spirit in man is one and absolute. Swami Vivekananda looked upon Vedanta as specially charged with the mission of elucidating the common basis of all religions and bringing about their final harmonization. What characterizes all these principles of his teaching is a dynamic wholeness of vision. There is tremendous power combined with comprehensiveness of outlook. This is a rare combination. Narrowness may breed fanatic zeal. Failure of energy may bring about a complacent tolerance and universality. But here we have immense energy harnessed to the most universal point of view. Vedanta in his hands becomes a gospel of intense activity and the widest expansion of spirit. Vedanta has a great future — as it would fulfil a fundamental need of humanity, only if it adheres to the firm lines that Swami Vivekananda laid down for its reconstruction. Philosophical Idealism and the general point of view of the religions are steadily losing ground in modern thought. It is clear that mere Mysticism or Western Idealism represented by Platonism or the German schools of the last century are powerless by themselves to establish the spiritual point of view. As Deussen saw clearly, the spiritual and philosophical resources of the Vedantic tradition are to be appropriated and utilized to the full for the establishment of such a point of view. If Vedanta is to be effective in this task of strengthening the structure of a spiritual standpoint in philosophy, it should be approached in the manner exemplified by Swami Vivekananda. It is no longer a question of preserving Vedanta; Vedanta becomes the central pillar supporting the edifice of man's Idealistic and spiritual aspirations.

VI

We are confronted in the modern world by humanitarian programmes lacking a spiritual foundation and the history of the religions has familiarized us with the phenomena of religions not issuing in vital moral regeneration and progress in the humanization of man. Both these are aberrations; if we would listen to Swami Vivekananda. Ethics, he saw clearly, is without a basis if it is not founded on the concept of a universal Ātman. Religion as the realization of Divinity is unreal if it does not signify a ceaseless striving for universal emancipation. Ethics needs to be spiritualized and Religion must be humanized. This two-fold reformation of outlook is urged with matchless force by his dynamic Vedanta.

VII

Nothing great has ever been achieved without faith in the greatness of human nature. No significant contribution to human uplift can ever be rendered if our conception of man is that he is a wretched and helpless creature. The masses can never be emancipated if our idea is that the worth of man is ultimately nothing. The most basic need, therefore, is to see something of lasting and weighty significance in man as man. This need, the Swamiji urges, is amply met only by the Vedantic declaration of the Divinity of man. In each man is enshrined the immortal divine essence waiting to be unveiled and manifested in all its splendour. Only this conviction can supply inspiration for lofty endeavour and heroic self-sacrifice for humanity. Hence the recurring assertion of the divinity of man.

Thus in all essentials Swami Vivekananda has re-invested the old Vedantic thought with new life and vitality and brought to the bewildered consciousness of modern man, guidance and illumination.

SAMADARSHITVAM OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

[Swami Vimalananda was one of Swamiji's disciples and had joined the Math after Swamiji's return from the West. —*Ed.*]

There was one more prominent feature of Swamiji's life which speaks to me volumes about his renunciation. I mean his dealing with rich men. Many of you are aware that among his foreign disciples some are very wealthy and a few of them came out to India to help Swamiji in his work. The treatment which he used to give them did not in the least differ from that given to his most insignificant Indian disciples. He was kind and loving by nature to all, but his love did not make him blind to their flaws and defects which needed mending.

Gentle speech would not always serve the purpose, and Swamiji would have to be at times hard. And in this apparently unpleasant treatment, his wealthy disciples would have exactly the same fate as his begging Sannyasins. At times, this would be too much for persons born and brought up in the lap of luxury and accustomed to hear words of praise and flattery. From a worldly point of view, Swamiji paid dear for it. But did he ever regret? Far from it. The perfect unconcern which he showed whether the rich people would stick to him or give him up is truly unprecedented.

Coming to the subtlest of all the ties that bind a man of some worth to the world, I mean, desire for fame, we see in Swamiji the same typical man of renunciation. While he was wandering as a common mendicant in various parts of India, he was studiously avoiding the praise of men by constantly shifting from place to place and changing his name. It was not possible for him to keep his extraordinary charming personality concealed from the knowledge of those who would come in touch with him. Many of them would like to be with him, but Swamiji would disappoint them by giving them the slip while they would be away from him and making it impossible to be found out by going to a new place and taking a new name. I may remark, in passing, that this period of his life which is the least known to the world, and, I believe, of the greatest interest for the study of the evolution of the inner man, was always characterized by a passion for keeping aloof from the company of others.

(From *the Vedanta Kesari*, Jan., Feb. 1923.)

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA — THE SPIRITUAL AMBASSADOR OF INDIA

U. THANT

[The following forms a substantial part of the speech delivered by His Excellency, U. Thant, the Secretary General of the United Nations, who was the chief speaker at a dinner held by the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, at the Warwick Hotel, on March 28, 1963, to celebrate the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda. — *Ed.*]

Swami Vivekananda, as most of you are aware, was the greatest spiritual ambassador of India, if I may say so, in the history of India. And for that matter, the history of Asia. The main purpose of his historic visit to the United States of America, over sixty years ago, was to find a synthesis, if I can interpret and assess his activities in this country. He was very keen to bring about this synthesis between India and the United States, and for that matter, between Asia and the West. To understand Swami Vivekananda it is very important to understand the cultural and spiritual background of India, the cultural and spiritual background of Asia.

In Asia, as most of you know, we attach more importance to the mind than to the body, and still much more importance to the spirit than to the mind. Traditionally, the aim of education in Asia has been — I stress the word traditionally—to discover what is happening inside of us, to discover what is the truth, to discover the truth inside of us, to learn to understand the extraordinary moral and spiritual qualities of man. In other words, the traditional aim of education and culture and civilization in Asia has been, throughout the centuries, the discovery of oneself, and to try to understand the spiritual qualities such as humility, reverence for old people, and so on.

In the West, the stress has been on the development of the intellect, if my interpretation of Western educational aims and ideals is correct. There is too much stress on the intellectual development of man. The aim of education in the West — when I say West, of course, it applies to the United States of America, Western Europe, and other countries of Europe too — has been, and still is, to create doctors, scientists, engineers, to discover outer space, to go to the moon and to Mars and the stars, while at the same time, the development of the moral and spiritual qualities of man is more or less ignored.

I feel rather strongly that the exclusive intellectual development without a corresponding moral and spiritual development is sure to lead us from one crisis to another. At the same time, in the middle of the twentieth century, in this space age, a purely moral and spiritual development unaccompanied by corresponding intellectual development is also an anachronism. So what is necessary in this second half of the twentieth century is a certain kind of synthesis, a certain kind of harmony, a certain harmonizing activity, by which man must be fully integrated. The development of man must be intellectual, moral and spiritual. Only then man will be able to achieve the objectives set out in his own particular religion.

I think if we attempt to analyse the main purpose of Swami Vivekananda's mission to this country — my interpretation is he wanted to find a harmony, a kind of a synthesis between the Eastern concept of culture and civilization and the Western concept of culture and civilization. It is very true of these tense times, much more than sixty years ago. What we need today is not to neglect or ignore the moral and spiritual qualities of mankind left by centuries of tradition and which are the keys of all religion.

Another aspect of Swami Vivekananda's mission, to my knowledge, is the need of tolerance. Need of tolerance in human relations. Not only religious tolerance but also tolerance in all spheres of activity. I think this message is also very necessary in these tense times; much more, if I may say so, much more than sixty years ago. If we recount a few phases of historical developments — let us say, for instance, a few centuries ago, there was no such thing as religious tolerance. Religious tolerance was unthinkable. Let us take, for instance, the Crusades. During the time of the Crusades the Christians believed, and they believed very strongly, that all non-Christians were heretics. The same applied to Muslims, perhaps to Hindus, perhaps to Buddhists, perhaps to Jews, but according to European history during the time of the Crusades the Muslims also believed very strongly that Christians were heretics. So both the Christians and the Muslims (they were known as Saracens in those days) they decided to put the others to the sword. Various Crusades took place resulting in the death of tens of thousands of people, both Christians and Muslims, but when reason prevailed they realized — both the Christians and the Muslims realized that both great religions could exist in amity, side by side without clashes, without hostilities, and without war. And since that time Christianity and Islam existed side by side in amity. Now in the twentieth century, of course, there is religious tolerance. Of course, there may be some exceptional cases in certain parts of the world, but generally speaking what humanity did not experience say, a hundred or two hundred years ago, is a reality now. Although there was no religious tolerance two or three generations ago, there is today religious tolerance.

With the same analogy, I may say, and I am sure you will agree with me, that in the second half of the twentieth century there is no political tolerance. We should not be surprised. Human nature is such that it likes to indulge in some passions like hatred and bitterness — sometimes even hysteria. But my feeling is, although there is no political tolerance in these days there will be political tolerance, perhaps in our generation and probably in the next one or two generations. This spirit of tolerance, this philosophy of live and let live, this concept of trying to understand the other's point of view, has been what Swami Vivekananda strove to put across — particularly to the American people. I think it is a very great lesson to be learned from the teachings of Swamiji.

When we say that his main mission here was a search for a synthesis and an appeal for tolerance, we should also try to understand the concept of culture, of civilization. The concept of civilization, of course, is very difficult to define — there is a mistaken impression, assumption, if I may say so, regarding the concept of civilization. There seems to be a general feeling that there is a kind of civilization existing in the West and a different type of civilization existing in the East. I feel that this a fallacy. Civilization connotes certain qualities of the heart. A civilized Indian, for instance, cannot be distinguished mentally and spiritually — morally and spiritually, from a civilized American. But a civilized Indian or a civilized American will find themselves very different from any of their compatriots in their own countries; so we cannot classify civilization in a particular region. It is primarily concerned with the qualities of the heart and the mind.

There is also another misconception, that wars and tensions were generated by conflicts of civilizations or conflicts of cultures. I think this is also a fallacy. If you read history you will find that England and France, or France and Germany, had wars for centuries, off and on, although they belonged to the same system of civilization and the same system of culture. The same can be said of many Asian countries which have been, throughout the centuries, at war with one another, although they belonged to the same culture and they subscribed to the same religious systems. So tensions and conflicts do not arise necessarily from the conflicts of culture, or the conflicts of civilizations. They rise primarily out of the evil in human beings, irrespective of geographical regions. I think this fact was also stressed by Swami Vivekananda in many of his speeches and statements.

He, of course, attempted to teach many of his American friends the methods and procedures involved in meditation and contemplation which have been the traditional methods of finding our own selves. As I said earlier, the stress of education in Asia, and particularly in India, which is a very rich cultural country for thousands of years, has been to discover what is happening inside of us. I have said earlier that the stress of education in the West has been traditionally for the intellectual development of man. But in Asia, particularly in India, we try to discover what is happening inside of us by methods of contemplation and meditation, which, of course, is very difficult for the Western audiences to understand. I think Swami Vivekananda attempted to present a very simple exposition of these methods of contemplation and meditation so that the Westerners may not be lopsided in their development — only exclusively in the intellectual field. Because he felt, very rightly, that the mere intellectual development will lead only to the discovery of what is outside of us. In America, in Europe, in Russia, in these countries, what is outside of us is very clearly defined while at the same time what is inside of us remains a deep, dark, jungle tract. So he brought out this idea of meditation and contemplation, with some success, of course, as you all know from many of the publications published since his visit here, and I think it may perhaps be appropriate for me to read one of his statements regarding this method of meditation and contemplation.

This is what Swamiji wrote on meditation: 'You must keep the mind fixed on one object; meditation should be like an unbroken stream of oil. The ordinary man's mind is scattered on different objects, and at the time of meditation, too, the mind is at first apt to wander. Let any desire whatever arise in the mind; sit calmly and watch what sorts of ideas are coming. By continuing to watch in that way, the mind becomes calm and there are no thought-waves in it. These waves represent the thought activity of the mind. Those things that you have previously thought about too deeply have transformed themselves into a sub-conscious current, and therefore they come up in the mind in meditation. The rise of these waves, or thoughts, during meditation is evidence that your mind is tending towards concentration.' To my knowledge this is the simplest recipe to practise this very noble and very desirable art of meditation and contemplation which is still being practised in many parts of Asia.

Then Swami Vivekananda among many of his messages had this very significant and very pertinent message for these tense times. He said, and I quote, 'In this country I do not come to convert you to a new belief. I want you to keep your own belief. I want to make the Methodist a better Methodist, the Presbyterian a better Presbyterian, the Unitarian a better Unitarian.' On this subject also I think it is worth quoting his attitude toward religious tolerance which, to me, is one of the wisest maxims which ever came into my experience. He said, 'I accept all the religions that were in the past, and worship them all. I worship God with every one of them, in whatever form they worship Him. I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammedan; I shall enter the Christian church and kneel before the Crucifix; I shall enter the Buddhist temple, where I shall take refuge in Buddha and his Law. I shall go into the forest and sit down in meditation with the Hindu, who is trying to see the Light which enlightens the hearts of everyone. Not only shall I do these things, but I shall keep my heart open for all that may come in the future.'

Those are very wise words and, friends, on this auspicious occasion when we are doing honour to one of the greatest men of all time, let us dedicate ourselves anew to this pledge: to make Christians better Christians, Hindus better Hindus, Muslims better Muslims, Buddhists better Buddhists, and Jews better Jews.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE BUILDING OF MODERN INDIA

(*Continued from Page* 200)

to progress with its majority community in such a state of disarray ? No, it was to be resurrected. But it is only in the low land of humility and suppression, seeds sown sprout into life. This is what the Swami did. And his prophetic vision has been turning historic day by day. With the national awakening of the Hindu community there is an all round awakening in the country. This is inevitable. And if the Swami saw this inevitability and took steps to expedite it, he certainly has done the greatest service to India, to the building up of the Indian nation. If India was to be reborn as a nation, Indians must wake up to the entire history of India, from its earliest period of legends to the distant future. That is integral India.

In spite of their Rājasūya and Aśvamedha yajñas, the Hindus had no idea of a politically united India. It dawned in the mind of the Maharashtra saint, Samartha Ramadas, whose disciple, Shivaji tried his best to put it into life. The Muslims and the English, since the time of Akbar had this idea and consciously tried to realize it. But both wanted to remain as conquerors ruling over a subject people, which was against the idea of a nation. The Hindus were, therefore, thought best to imbibe the new idea of an integral India, because their ancestral Ṛṣis laid a sound cultural foundation for the political superstructure. The Swami took advantage of this.

But the Hindus were hopelessly divided. Their quarrels among themselves, for petty local customs, were more bitter than those with the other two communities, who were merrily making dents into their folds. As no chain is stronger than its weakest link, wisdom lay in making the weakest link as strong as possible ; and this should be the first and foremost task of a nation builder. In working almost solely for the Hindus, the Swami did nothing else but this. The Hindus being the majority community it stands to reason that they should be made the strongest — not to use their strength like Titans against all others for their own maximum enjoyment, but to apply it for the good of all, to sacrifice and dedicate themselves for the welfare of all. That is the idea behind his scheme of Brāhmaṇising all, a real Brāhmaṇa is one who has no external possession and whose internal possessions such as learning, moral excellences and skill are all directed to commonweal. Commonweal indeed, but not to exploit and oppress others outside the nation but to raise oneself towards *abhyudaya* — hence to culture the feeling of brotherliness towards all humanity. That being Swamiji's idea, could he have gone against the interest of other communities of India or have ignored the welfare of other communities ? When he takes up the fallen brothers to the level of other brothers, makes them decent, strong, wise and pious, when these other brothers, instead of turning up their nose in contempt would welcome them as worthy comrades-in-arm, then alone would have come the time to resume integral India's march towards a glorious nationhood. His exhortation to take up the work of uplifting the Pariahs, the masses and women first, in that order, has the same idea behind it — to make the weakest and the most neglected, strong and forward and worthy of comradeship.

II

With the foresight of a true realist Swamiji set out for unifying and strengthening the Hindu society and bringing out and holding before the Hindus, the strength-giving message of the Vedas and Upaniṣads. It was a stupendous task — to bring solidarity in the hopelessly divided Hindu fold. So much emphasis was laid, for at least half a millennium, on the particulars that the general concept of being a Hindu was totally absent. Everyone thought himself to be a lover of Krishna, or Rama, or Shiva or any Devi ; or belonging to this village or that village ; or to this caste or that ; nobody felt himself to be a Hindu or an Indian or a

Vedist or a Vedantist. Not only were the masses totally neglected, but they were socially suppressed and economically depressed; and they were further sub-divided into untouchables and unapproachables. Women lost their social dignity and were deprived of their education. The higher castes were narrow and arrogant, and though highly learned, were foolish as not to understand their real interest as a nation. Even pundits, well-versed in the Vedantic doctrines, would not practise them in life but follow local customs, meaningless and detrimental to national solidarity, and would force them on the masses by social boycott. There were people who were immensely rich, side by side with those who could not get a meal a day, and therefore were unconcerned about what was going on about those who were all reduced to the sub-human level. Such a heterogeneous people, so hopelessly divided and so keenly jealous of one another, were to be roused and raised.

The Swami pondered and meditated on this as he would on God, till the two coalesced, and India became his God. He observed, that the inside of Hindu India, was good and noble, as in the days of the Vedanta and the Buddha; that the tyrants and the victims, in all their uglinesses, were not as bad as their counterparts in other countries; that the light was still burning inside each heart as steadily as ever, only the coverings, by accumulations of ages, had become too thick, in many cases impenetrable. The coverings were to be cracked and cast to the winds. The superstitions were many and varied, varying with different groups of people. To study the problems, in all their bearings and to find out their solutions, the Swami undertook travel on foot throughout the length and breadth of India and mixed with all classes of people. The solution came in a vivid form while this holy pilgrimage was half gone through. In intimate talks with the Rajahs and Maharajahs in India he revealed his plan. A few appreciated. But they had not the courage to do anything for fear of the British Residents and officials. Nothing could be expected of them. The orthodoxy were under the heels of the gerund-grinder pundits. The Swami's ideas were so revolutionary, socially, economically and even spiritually, that even after the lapse of sixty years and more, people, even those who have studied his lectures and writings have not been able to understand them fully, far less to convert them in life. The Swami saw it was not one life's or one generation's work. It would require three generations of devoted and dedicated workers, for whose training, more practical than theoretical, an organization with various centres of activity, both in and outside India, was necessary. Sleeping India was not expected to hear and follow him. Slave India must hear his voice through the echo of her master, the West. The West gave him what he wanted — the authority and some men and money. India's cheques to be cashed in India had to be honoured by the Western banks — this is still the situation.

On his return from the West, an organization, viz. the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, was started; and the Swami himself now armed with authority, broadcast his plan and purpose in words of thunder and India heard him adoringly. Paradoxically this divided the country into two loving groups — the worker, dedicated and full of rajas and fearless, and their loving and admiring helpers, giving them their wherewithals to serve the country and to maintain themselves and their training centres. Thus seeing the work started and finding the machine well-greased and in working order, the Swami a true leader that he was, left the field for his workers to continue the task devotedly.

This programme, as has already been pointed out, was laid down for unifying and strengthening the Hindu society and religion. But this is only a step, though a major step, in the building of the Indian nation. The work is so arduous and stupendous that after sixty years of work by the Mission it seems that we have not even touched the fringe of the problems. But the consciousness of the nation has been roused.

Let us now come to the definite problems in the Hindu society. Its most important problem, which is giving any amount of trouble to the political parties and the administrators of our days, is the caste system. Should it go or remain or change shape? To answer this we have to consider whether 'caste' is different from 'class'. Most people have taken it as qualitatively different from 'class', which is current in all countries, including the red. If, however, we analyze their criticisms we find them centering round two points, the privileges enjoyed by the so-called higher 'castes' and their hereditary nature. Of the two, the first is common with the higher classes in all the countries the world over. And it is against these privileges, which have assumed very ugly forms, even in the West, that the reds raised their standard of revolt. But even in the red countries the writers and the scientists are a special class, enjoying privileges denied to others. We do not grudge it, we take it as but natural; but the focal points, we say, should change now and then to suit the exigencies of progressing societies. So the other point, its hereditary nature, remains to be answered. The right of primogeniture may debar many from inheriting the ancestral property but not the ancestral intelligence and family training. Heredity dies hard and may not be murdered, but may be properly utilized. Is it not a fact that some of the best labour leaders or even red leaders come from the aristocracy; and have not the labour and communist party derived benefits from them? India's fault was that she recognized it and legalized it and reaped the benefit therefrom for several centuries. When, however, stagnation set in there were none to reform the society or point out the defects of the age. The reason for the indifference and failure the Swami stated in most pungent words — the privileged would not part with their privileges, the educated would not educate others. And it is the same picture throughout the world; but India alone is to be blamed because she has to be! This is the Swami's defence of the caste system.

But did the Swami want to retain the present caste system? The Swami was born unorthodox and died unorthodox. When not even in his teens he was seen touching the hubble-bubbles of various castes with his lips in order to see if the heaven would fall, if he did not obey the caste-rules. To his last days he remained a deadly enemy of castes as prevailed in the society. But he was a supporter of the system in another sense. By caste system he meant the system as described in the Gītā, i.e. social divisions according to mental and professional characteristics of man. If this caste system, as sanctioned by the Gītā, is once admitted, it follows, as a corollary, that with advancement of knowledge and change and improvement or deterioration of the economic condition of the society there should be occasional, even periodical adjustments and re-adjustments of the system. To be stereotyped in castes is to court death, to which point India almost came. Now the country is on the way to industrialization, whose staunch advocate the Swami was. New industries would entail regroupings of men and women with new sets of guiding principles. A country's economy has surely a hand in shaping society. So the system will remain but castes will change. As too rapid changes go against stabilization, society, to be stable, must stand against constant changes in all matters, economy including. Here comes in the other danger of castes being hereditary. It is always safe to prefer the mean and avoid the extremes. And in the tussle, between man's will to follow the mean and nature's urge to go to the extreme, progress blesses mankind.

(To be continued)

CORRIGENDUM

Please read as "catholicity" in place of "catholocity" on page 200, column 1 last but one line of first para, also read "Grecian" for "Greecian", in second column of the same page, second line and "Roman" for "Romain" on the third line.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND INDIAN CULTURE

SWAMI PREMESHANANDA

[Swami Premeshananda, a disciple of the Holy Mother, is a senior monk of the Ramakrishna Order and a very learned Swami. He was in charge of Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Dacca for a long time. His poems in Bengali on Sri Ramakrishna were very much appreciated even by the direct disciples of the Master. This is a free translation of a part of the notes of his discussions on Indian Culture, Sri Ramakrishna and Swamiji taken down in Bengali. The later portions will be published serially in the *Vedanta Kesari*. — *Ed.*]

From the almost irresistible attraction that Sri Ramakrishna felt for Swami Vivekananda and from the high praise that Sri Ramakrishna lavished on him, we regarded Swamiji as a very great sage. But our imagination failed to conceive what he was when we read what Holy Mother, once in a divine vision, saw of him — she saw Sri Ramakrishna merge into Swamiji. What then was impossible, on this earth, for a person into whom the infinite Brahman, the Avatar, the Incarnation, Sri Ramakrishna, had entered ! Perhaps that is the reason why we find Swamiji's lectures and writings so inspiring, so sweet.

II

Puranas speak about the 'associate-bodies'* of an Incarnation. What is meant by that ? 'Associate-bodies' of an Incarnation are those persons through whose help an Incarnation fulfils his divine mission. Sri Ramachandra, it is said, brought his younger brothers into this world for his divine purpose, so too did Sri Krishna bring associates like Sankarshaṇa (Balarama), Pradyumna and Aniruddha. But these things appeared to us as very queer ; we could neither understand them well, nor could we believe in them. From the meagre descriptions given in the *purāṇas* we could know very little about the relation between the Incarnations, Rama and Krishna, and their associates. However, it has been quite different this time. The divine play of the greatest of the Incarnations, Sri Ramakrishna was enacted only the other day. With the help of modern facilities we have been able to know authoritatively every detail of his life history. In Sri Ramakrishna's life we see the full manifestation of Truth. Again, in the Holy Mother's life we see the application of this eternal Truth in the practical field ; and in Swamiji's life the full realization of this ideal, as well as the logic behind the ideal's transformation into the actual (in work) has been seen. Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother and Swamiji were only three forms of the same Being. Sannyasins and other householder disciples surely helped Sri Ramakrishna in his mission but the Holy Mother and Swamiji were his *alter egos*. They came into this world with one single purpose, one single motive, — about this there is not the least doubt.

It is written in the Yoga Śāstras that the yogis go through enjoyments and sufferings in their entirety in one life, in order to take up a pure body for the sake of attaining liberation. Similarly, the Incarnations of the Lord too take with them, but in a larger measure, ever pure associates for the well-being of the whole of mankind. We have the Master's own opinion about his identity with Swamiji, both expressed and implied, in the incident in which Sri Ramakrishna makes Narendra smoke from his own hands and from the same pipe which he had used and was going to use

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NOTE : This article forms a summary of the notes of a discussion on Indian culture, Sri Ramakrishna and Vivekananda which the writer had with a member of the Order. It is possible therefore, that there may be repetition of the same idea or the idea being stressed in different ways. It is requested that the readers take this into consideration while going through these pages.

* कायव्यूह

again. Again, the Holy Mother has confirmed from her divine visions, the non-difference between the Master and Swamiji. And, about herself she had definitely and repeatedly told that the Master and herself were not two, but one. Sri Ramakrishna's disciples too looked upon Swamiji with the same deference as they did the Master. An instance of such devotion to Swamiji by Baburam Maharaj (Swami Premananda) is related in *Talks with Swami Vivekananda.*

III

In our land the word 'Digvijaya' (conquest of the four corners of the world) is widely known. There was a custom among the kings of old to go out for a conquest (in the then accessible parts of the country), when they desired to perform the *Rājasūya Yajña.* Even in the history of other countries too, this going out on a conquest happened. To mention a few instances, the exploits of Alexander, Chengiz Khan, Napoleon etc. are not unknown.

Of course, from our point of view these conquests were barbaric. Against this we have what is popularly termed the other type of conquest, 'Digvijaya', of the Buddhist monks. They too went out, travelled far and wide and spread their religion in distant countries. Śri Śankarācārya travelled all over India, defeated the adherents of non-Vedic religions and brought them back into the fold of the Eternal Religion. This too has been termed by some as 'Digvijaya'. But it goes without saying that in the face of Swamiji's 'conquest', of the West in the present age, all other historic conquests pale into insignificance. For in ancient times the world of transactions and contacts was so small, the people living in distant lands knew each other so little. Compared with that world we cannot but call this present day world altogether a new one.

But to put on a par the historical or geographical conquests of kings and the preaching of religion by the Buddhists or Śankara or call it by the same term, is, we think, mere childishness. There is a world of difference between the two. The Incarnations preach religion in order to bring to the righteous path, mankind, which is in a sorry plight due to its straying away and not to defeat people with the purpose of establishing supremacy or tyrannizing over them. These noble souls feel the misery of all creatures as their own, and therefore in order to save others they dispel their evil tendencies and teach them the cultivation of good ones. On account of this immense service, people spontaneously offer them the highest regard and love. Unfortunately these actions of the Great Ones appear to the ignorant as the means they adopt to fulfil their own selfish ends.

Again, the followers of other religions, without understanding the message of their own prophets, have perpetrated atrocities and trampled down on people professing religions other than their own. And the pity of it is, these tramplings have been jubilantly termed as great conquests by the ignorant. So when Swamiji placed before the West the grand philosophy of Hinduism and received great approbation, the Hindus justly observed that the cause of the Eternal Religion has been vindicated. But in Swamiji's triumph there was not the slightest desire to domineer over others. His only aim was to proclaim the eternal truths to mankind and never was it a conquest in the sense of tyrannizing. As a parallel, we can take for instance Euclid's Geometry. It is studied all over the world. But because of this can the Greeks think that the whole world has come under their sway? Again, is the aim of a mother, who takes care of her son with all her heart and with all her soul, to domineer over her son?

The whole of humanity, due to ignorance, had become blind to the Eternal truths, creating illusive differences between man and man; people fought, like children, amongst themselves and are doing it even today. Vivekananda who felt intensely, more than a mother, for our well-being, gave his life for the retrieval of humanity by the propagation of these eternal truths, which were discovered

(*Continued on Page* 328)

SOME INCIDENTS OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S CHILDHOOD

SWAMI SUDDHASATWANANDA

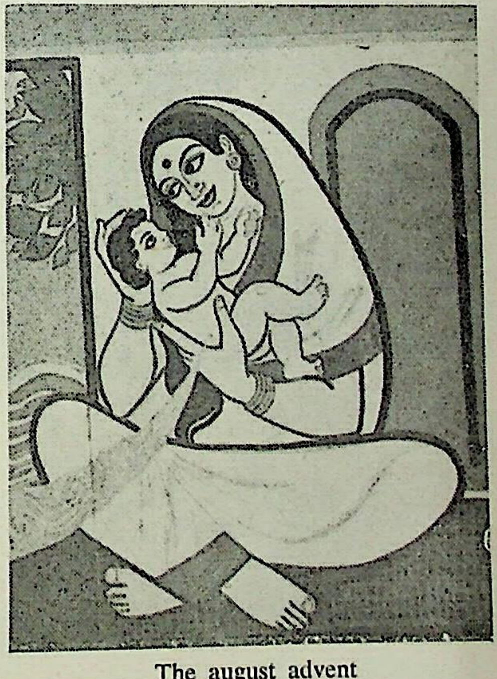
[Swami Suddhasatwananda is the Manager, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras. He narrates here Swamiji's childhood days in brief with a number of illustrations depicting the incidents.—*Ed.*]

People are mostly acquainted with the later life of Swami Vivekananda, especially from the date when the 'Lion of Vedanta' roared through his voice and the Western world acclaimed him as the best and greatest exponent of the Hindu religion.

His life as a Parivrajaka (wandering monk), when he, as a penniless, unknown and unhonoured Sannyasin, had travelled on foot from the Himalayas to the Kanyakumari, which is full of thrilling incidents, is also not read, discussed or heard with much enthusiasm. And it is needless to say that very few know about his childhood. We say, 'morning shows the day', 'child is the father of man', but when we see the bright and glorious light of mid-day, alas, we forget the soothing and peaceful morning. Generally this happens everywhere.

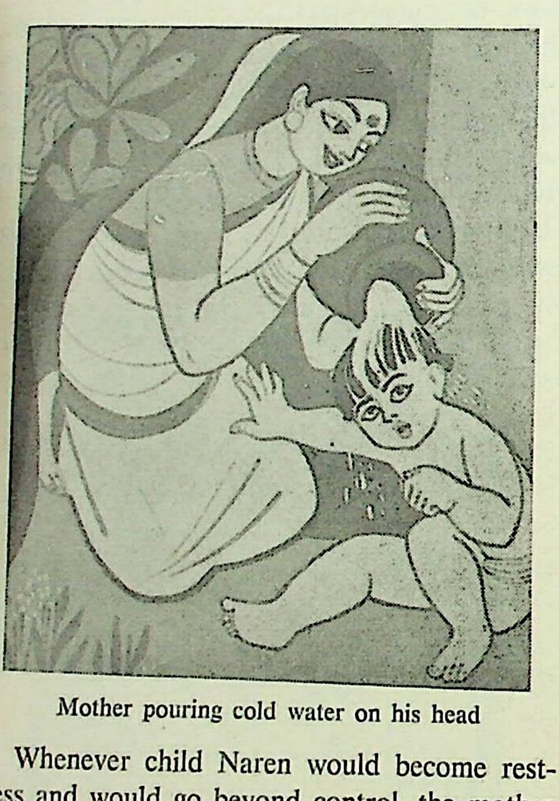
But we cannot deny the fact that the future Swami Vivekananda was hidden in the child Naren, endearingly called Bileh by his mother and others. The incidents of his childhood give us a clear indication of and throw much light on his future greatness. Really, if we study those incidents, we will find that each one of them was so significant, each one had so much bearing on one or the other aspect of his later glorious life.

Bhubaneswari Devi, though she was the mother of four daughters, was not blessed with a son, till January 12th, 1863. She prayed to her chosen deity Lord Siva and requested her aunt, residing at the holy Varanasi, to offer worship to Lord Vireswara there on her behalf. The simple lady with all devotion and faith started worshipping Vireswara Siva every day with Gangajal and Bilwa leaf. The offerings attended with the heartfelt prayers of Bhubaneswari Devi must have reached the Lord and satisfied Him immensely. Some months before the birth of Narendranath, one day his mother spent the whole day in the shrine in the presence of the Lord, praying with utmost devotion and earnestness and when she was asleep that night she had a wonderful dream, very vivid, very delightful. She saw in her dream, 'Lord Siva arouse Himself out of His transcendent meditation and take the form of a male child who was to be born as her own son'. Her mind was filled with unspeakable joy at the confident thought that her long and heartfelt prayer was soon going to be answered and her expectations were really fulfilled on the holy hour of the dawn of the *Makara Samkaranti day*, January 13, 1863, when the divine baby illumined her lap. Father Viswanath Dutta was immensely happy. The constellation of stars at the auspicious moment


The august advent

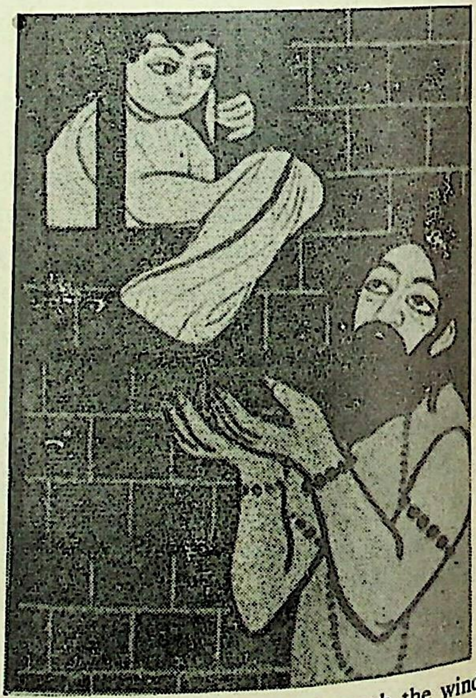
of the birth indicated that the child would be a great Apostle of peace and fraternity. Another St. Paul was born to be joined with his Master who was so eagerly waiting for him only a few miles away at the temple garden of Dakshineswar.

Narendranath grew to be a very naughty child. Sometimes, he would become so restless that it would be impossible for the mother to bring the child under control. He would be playing the hide and seek game with the mother who would be chasing him to catch him. No amount of promises, threats and caresses would quieten the boy. There was only one way to bring him round, which the mother discovered after making various futile experiments, and that was to pour cold water on his head.


Mother pouring cold water on his head

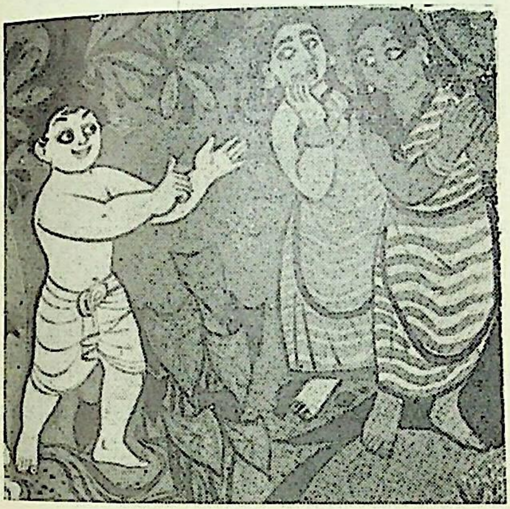
Whenever child Naren would become restless and would go beyond control, the mother would pour sufficient cold water on his head repeating 'Siva', 'Siva' in his ears. She would threaten him saying that if he were naughty, Siva would not take him to Kailasa and at once he would become calm. Was it an indication of the fact that with the chanting of Siva's name, Naren would at once feel his affinity with Him? Sometimes the mother would be heard saying, 'I prayed to Lord Siva for a son and He has sent me one of His ghosts.'

From his childhood, Narendra had a great fascination for Sannyasins. He would be greatly delighted if any Sannyasin would come to his house. He would talk with them as if they were his own. He would never send away any Sannyasin or beggar empty-handed. One day a monk came to Narendra's house for alms. At that time he was wearing a new cloth wrapped round his waist. Seeing nothing at hand to give to the monk, he took off his new cloth and gave it to him. The Sadhu was very happy, tied the cloth round his head as a turban and went away thanking the boy. His parents sometimes felt embarrassed over this, but Naren would not hear anybody, so the parents thought it fit to lock him in an upstairs room whenever any monk or beggar would come to the door. Once when he was thus imprisoned, he saw a monk with matted hairs on the street asking for alms. Narendra at once started throwing clothes to him through the window.


Narendra throwing clothes through the window

Narendra's love for the Sadhus from his childhood was a clear indication of his future life and his giving away things would bespeak of his deep love and sympathy for the poor.

Narendra would play and quarrel with his sisters. What a great tease he was! Sometimes, the sisters would chase him to punish him, but it was so difficult to catch him! If by chance, the sisters were able to overtake him, he would at once jump into the open drain full of broken mud vessels and filth and make faces at his sisters showing his fingers and saying, 'Now come and catch me'. The sisters were to move away in great amazement lest they should be polluted.



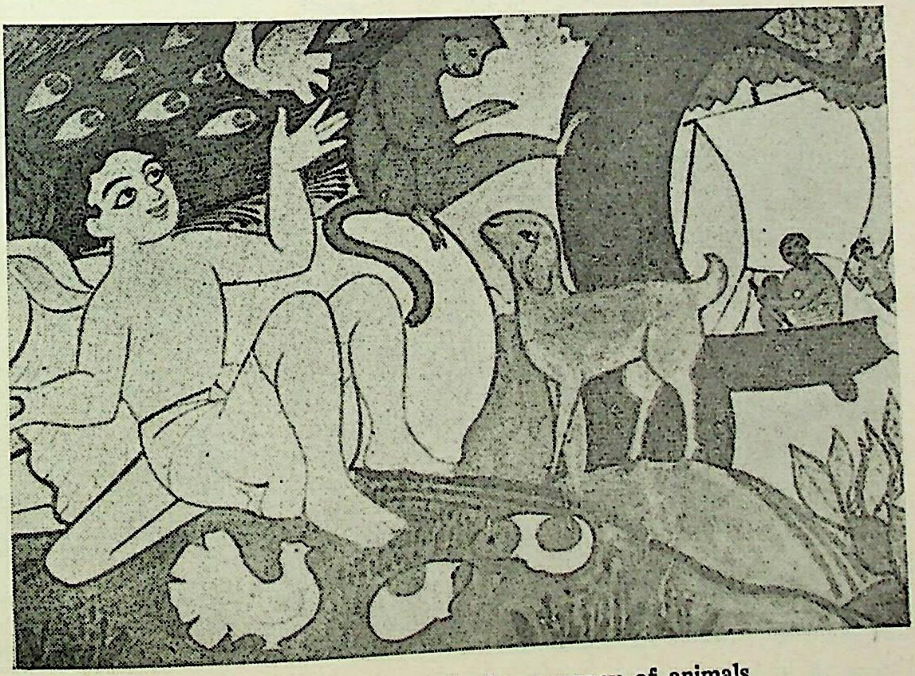
Narendra standing in the open drain

Viswanath Dutta had tamed a number of animals such as peacocks, monkeys, goats, pigeons, parrots and a few guinea pigs, apart from cows and horses. All these were Naren's pet animals and most of them were his playmates. The animals and birds would not be afraid when Narendra would come to them. He would bathe them, feed them, caress them. He was especially fond of the cow. He would some times place garlands round their necks and put vermilion on their foreheads. He was absolutely fearless, rather he would feel happy in their company. The animals and birds could read his heart and loved him very dearly.

Even when he became a Sannyasin and was staying at the Belur Math, people were astonished to see his love and affection for the Math cows, goats, and dogs. Perhaps from his very childhood, he could see the same affectionate Lord present in all and that may be the reason why we find the same feelings afterwards echoing in his writings.

In those days there were no motor cars. There were innumerable horse carriages of different types. Narendra, in his childhood had great attraction for those horses and especially for the coachman. To him the coachman having a big moustache with his turban on and driving whip in hand, with a whiz in the mouth, was a magnificent person and one of the ambitions of his childhood days was to become a coachman. In fact, once being asked by his father as to what he would become when he would grow, he proudly replied that he would become a coachman.

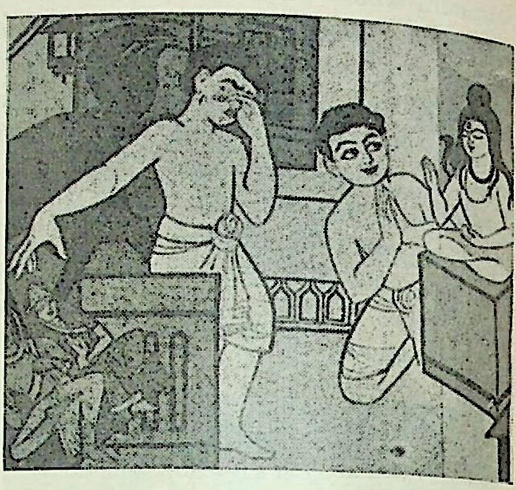
His father had a coach and the coachman was Naren's friend, philosopher and guide. He



Narendra quite happy in the company of animals would often be found engaged in serious talks with him and his opinions were of great importance to young Naren.

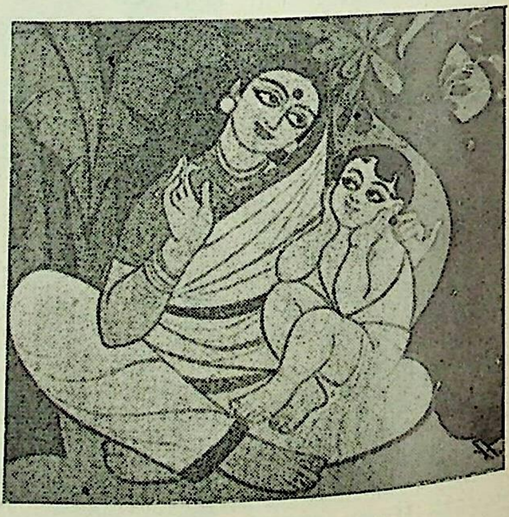
Hearing the *Ramayana* from elders often, he became greatly devoted to Sri Rama and Sita and he became eager to worship them. With Narendra, to think, was to work. So, one day, he collected a few coppers and along with a Brahmin playmate went to the market, purchased a clay image of Rama and Sita. After returning he immediately installed the image in the staircase room at the top and started worshipping it closing the doors and became absorbed in meditation. His long absence made the mother very anxious and when he was not found anywhere, all went up and seeing the door closed started knocking at it; but there was no reply. At last they broke open the door and saw to their great astonishment and relief young Bileh in deep meditation in front of the image of Rama and Sita. Often he would be found meditating and worshipping and his love and devotion to Rama and Sita grew deeper.

In the meantime a funny thing happened. One day after worship he went to the stable to his groom-friend and in the course of discussion, the groom told him, 'It is very bad to marry'. He said it from his personal experience as his married life was not at all peaceful. There would often be quarrels and dissensions and he would find it difficult to manage and feed a number of children. He convinced the boy that a married man would generally lose all freedom and happiness and lead a miserable life. Young Narendra at once determined not to marry. But a great problem arose. Rama and Sita whom he loved so much, to whom he was so devoted, were married. He felt miserable and started sobbing. On being asked by the mother, he told her everything to which the mother replied smilingly, 'What does it matter, you worship Siva!' In the evening, Narendra went into the puja room, gazed at the images of Rama and Sita, took them up and with a heavy sigh and deep sorrow he threw them down. Next day he purchased an image of Lord Siva, installed Him in the same place and began worshipping Him.



Narendra throwing away the image of Rama-Sita, started worshipping Siva

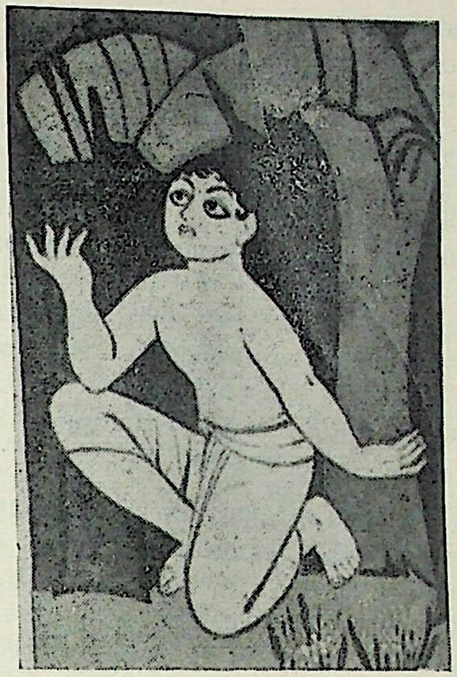
Though Naren threw away the image of Rama and Sita, his love and great enthusiasm to hear the stories from the *Ramayana* never waned. He was never tired of hearing the stories repeated. Wherever there would be Ramayana Katha (discourses), Narendra would be there from the beginning to the end. He would often pester the elders to tell him stories from the *Ramayana*, and in the evenings, he would sit on his mother's lap and would hear them with rapt attention forgetting everything.



Hearing the Ramayana

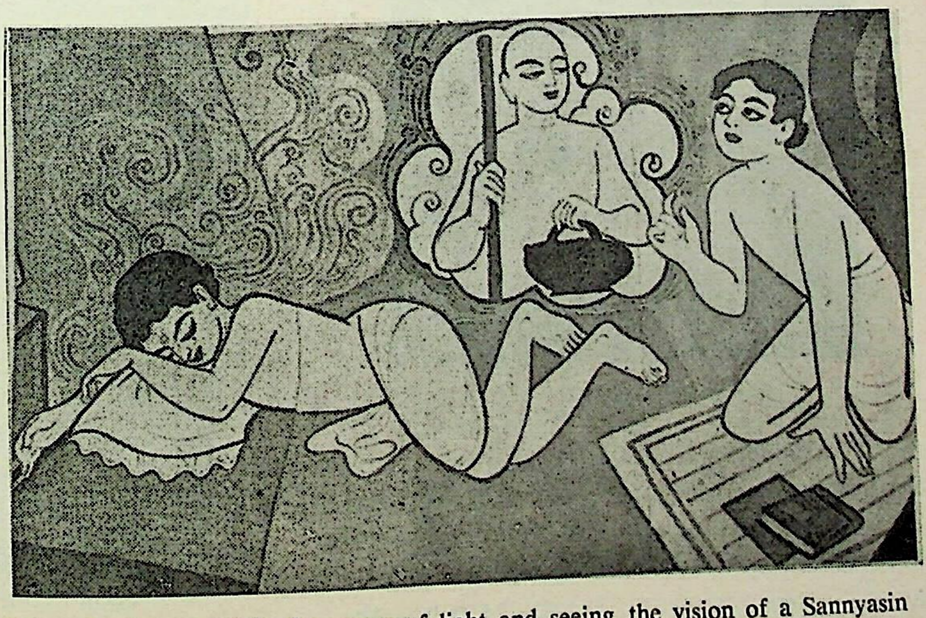
While narrating the Ramayana stories, the mother would often mention about Hanuman (the monkey chief), how he was deeply devoted to Rama, how he by one jump cleared the ocean and went to Lanka (Ceylon) to bring news of Sita, how he brought the entire Gandhamadan mountain when Lakshmana fell in the battle, how he was ever ready to serve his Lord Rama and about a host of his other virtues. Hearing all these, young Naren became greatly devoted to Hanuman. One evening while he was attending a Harikatha in a neighbouring house, he came to know that Hanuman lived in banana groves and could be seen by pure and earnest souls. Though it was quite late, the thought of seeing Hanuman had entered so deep in his mind, that he forgot about food and home and entering a nearby banana grove waited there to see Hanuman, with breathless expectation.

After waiting for a long time, when Hanuman did not make his appearance, he came back home sorely disappointed. Coming to know the cause of his sorrow, others consoled him saying, 'Today Hanuman must have gone somewhere in connection with his Lord's work, so you could not see him.' This pacified him a little. Later on he would mention this incident and speak glowingly about Hanuman, whose ideal life and noble character had created a deep and lasting impression in his mind. Once he thought of erecting Hanuman's marble statue at the Belur Math.



Naren in expectation of Hanuman in the banana grove

Another peculiarity with him was that he would see a strange vision every night when he would go to sleep. As soon as he closed his eyes, he would see between his eyebrows a wonderful bright light which would change hues and gradually expand and burst, enveloping his whole body in a flood of lustrous radiance. He would get drowned in that ocean of lustre and then fall asleep. It was a daily occurrence with him and he thought it was everyone's experience. Afterwards his spiritual teacher (Sri Ramakrishna) asked him, 'Naren, do you see any light between your eyebrows before you sleep?' He replied in the affirmative. This experience continued throughout his life; though in the later part of his life it was not so frequent. It was a clear sign of a great spiritual past. Sri

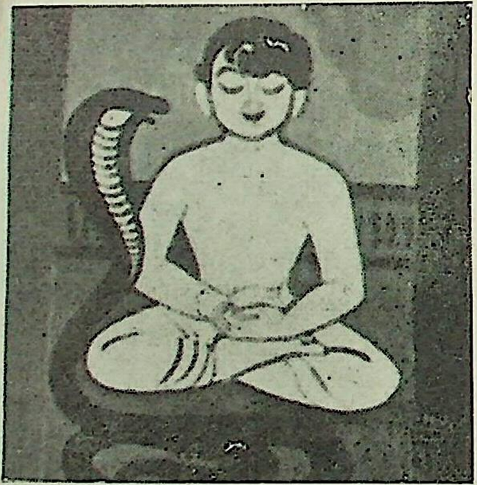


Narendra immersed in the ocean of light and seeing the vision of a Sannyasin

Ramakrishna hearing of this said, 'It is the sign of a *dhyana siddha* (one adept in meditation).'

One day, meditation over, he was sitting quietly in a closed room when he saw an effulgent divine figure appear before him. It was the vision of a Sannyasin with shaven head and Danda (staff) and Kamandalu (waterpot) in hand. He looked at Naren, as if he wanted to say something. After some time, the figure vanished and was never seen again. Narendra used to say afterwards 'Perhaps he was Lord Buddha'.

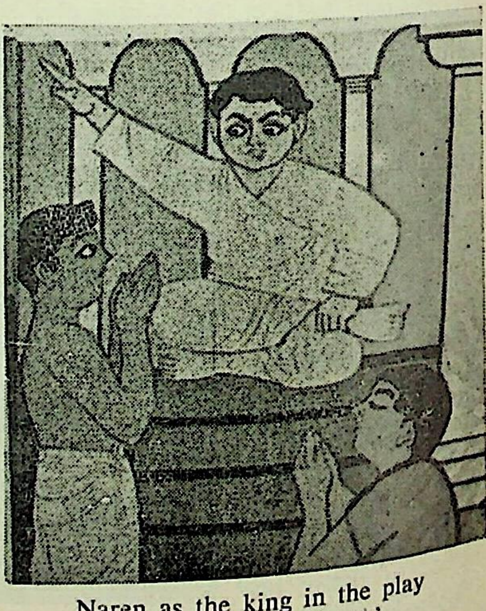
As children are fond of play, Narendra would find joy in playing at meditation. He would often be found sitting with closed eyes either before an image of God or on the roof. He would be sometimes so much absorbed in meditation that he would lose all outward consciousness and would be sitting for a long time. Sometimes he would sit alone and sometimes along with his playmates. Naturally they were not accustomed to meditation, but they had to close their eyes and sit erect at the behest of Naren but the next moment they would be looking at Naren whether he had opened his eyes, and whether his meditation was over. Once while Naren was thus meditating with his playmates and had become deeply absorbed in it, all of a sudden a cobra appeared there. Seeing the cobra, the other boys fled away raising a hue and cry. This attracted the attention of the parents who came running and became terribly upset to see the cobra with its hood raised. They were at a loss as to what to do. Fortunately, the snake slowly glided away and they heaved a sigh of relief. On being asked Narendra said, 'I knew nothing of the snake or anything else. I was feeling an inexpressible bliss.'



Naren lost in meditation

Naren was fond of other plays also. His energy was indomitable and sometimes his friends would not be able to keep pace with him. He was a born leader. Whether in his childhood, or during his student life or during his monastic life, he was always the leader. Sri Ramakrishna, his guru, made him the leader of all his sannyasin disciples. He had such a wonderful personality that others needed no asking to accept his leadership. All would obey him spontaneously and feel glad and sometimes proud to do so. They would feel safe under his leadership and would firmly believe that if Naren were the leader, then everything would go on all right, there would be no cause for any fear.

While he was a young lad of five or six, one of his favourite games was 'King and the Court'. Naturally he would play the part of the king. The highest step of the staircase leading to the puja room would form the throne. There

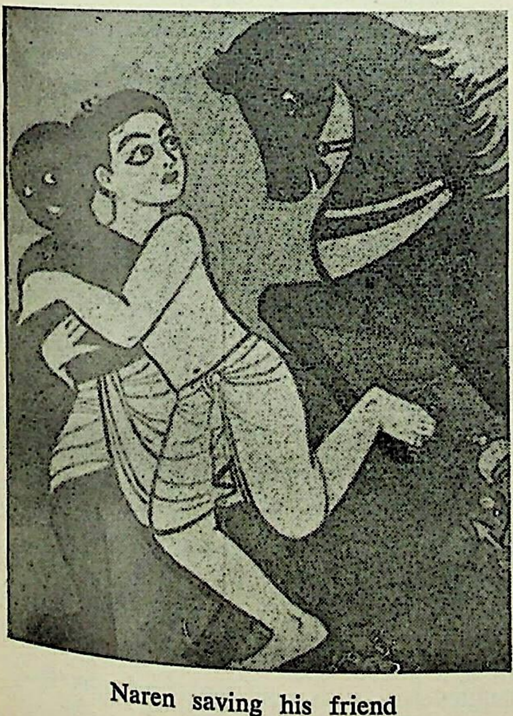


Naren as the king in the play
'King and the Court'

he would instal himself with all grandeur and gravity as the king. One of his playmates would become the Prime Minister, another the Commander-in-Chief and so on. They would be standing with folded hands before Naren the king, for orders. The impersonating princes and other dignitaries would be seated on the lower steps according to their ranks. Naren would hear complaints and grievances and administer justice with royal dignity. Nobody would be bold enough to disobey him and he would put down the slightest insubordination by a stern and angry glance.

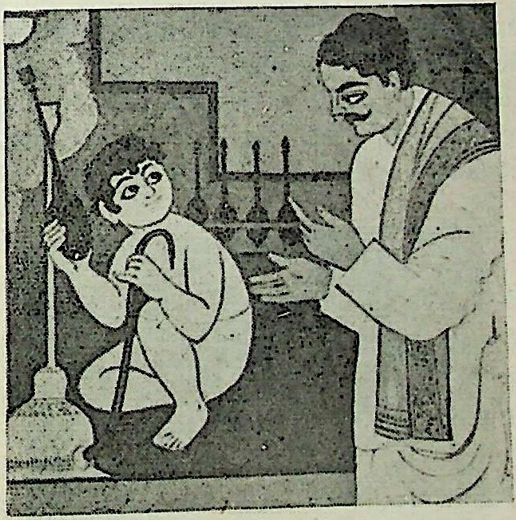
Narendra's bravery and presence of mind, even when he was a boy of six, merit admiration and deserve special mention. There are a number of incidents in his life which are clear indications of the above virtues. Only one such is mentioned here.

Once, with a companion he went to see a fair. There they purchased an image of Siva. It was almost dark when they were returning. Naren was walking very fast. But when he turned back to look for his friend he saw his companion almost being trampled under the hoofs of a galloping horse. Risking his own life, he ran towards his friend with utmost speed, caught hold of the boy and jumped on to the footpath, saving the friend from certain death. It all happened in the twinkling of an eye and the bystanders profusely praised the boldness and presence of mind of child Naren.



Naren saving his friend

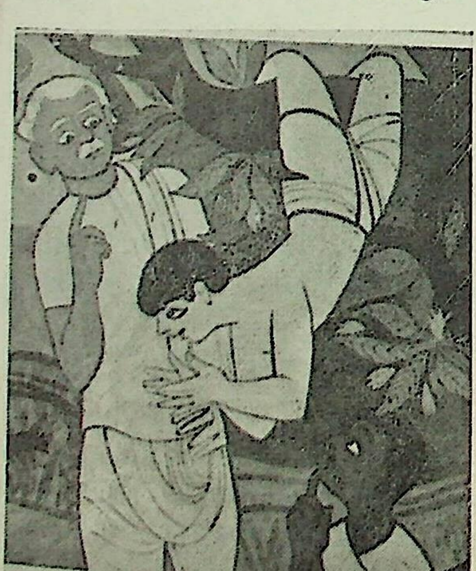
We all know how vehemently Swami Vivekananda denounced untouchability and oppression that was practised in the name of caste. He looked upon everyone as a child of God and would address others: 'Ye, children of immortality.' How this was ingrained in his mind even when he was a mere child, will be evident from the following incident. Naren's father Viswanath Dutta was a flourishing Attorney of the Calcutta High Court and among his clients, there were Muslims, Christians, Brahmins, non-brahmins and others. In order to entertain them, tobacco pipes (Hukka) were provided separately for each caste. Narendra used to notice carefully that each one of the client was using the tobacco pipe marked for a particular caste. It was a riddle to him. Why this distinction? What would happen if a Muslim would smoke from a Brahmin's tobacco pipe or *vice-versa*? And because some elders had threatened him once that one would lose one's caste if one would smoke from the other's pipe, he wanted to test it for himself. So one day when the father was busy talking to the clients outside and nobody was there in the room, young Naren made the cir-



Narendra smoking from the pipes

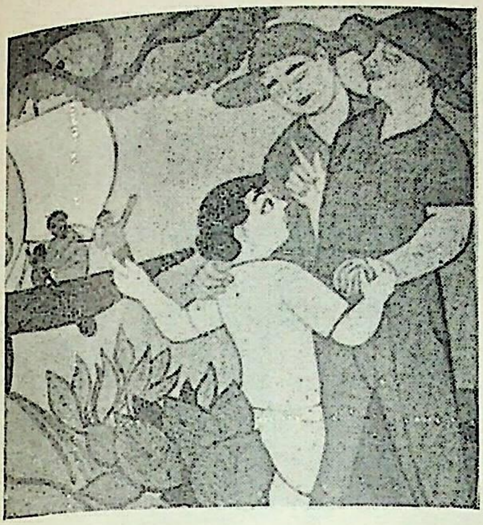
cuit of the pipes taking a whiff from every pipe including the one meant for the Mohammedans. But nothing happened, he did not find any change in him. The father who had entered at that juncture was amused to see Naren near the pipes and asked him what he was doing there. Narendra replied, 'I am testing whether I would lose my caste by smoking every pipe. But nothing has happened to me father!' and started laughing.

Even from his childhood, Narendra pooh-poohed all superstitions and he never knew what fear was. Sometimes because of this, his companions would find themselves in awkward situations, but Narendra's spirited protests and exhortations would make them also bold. He would not accept any statement which did not satisfy his reason and he would not believe in anything unless and until it would stand the test of reason to his satisfaction. In how many ways he tested even his own Guru, Sri Ramakrishna! He never accepted him in the beginning as an Avatara. He was not a person to believe in anything because some great one had said so. The following incident is illustrative of this characteristic of his. During holidays, he would sometimes go to the neighbouring house along with a friend, climb a big flowering tree and would enjoy swinging like a bat with his head downwards catching hold of a branch with the legs. The grandfather of the house got afraid seeing young Naren so swinging, and ordered him to come down and never to climb that tree again. Narendra asked, 'What will happen if I climb?' The grandfather in order to frighten him said, 'There is a terrible Brahmadaitya (Brahmin's ghost) living on that tree and if you climb on it, it will break your neck'. Naren listened politely but as soon as the old man was out of sight, he climbed up the tree again. His friend was terribly afraid to hear about the ghost but Naren laughed at him saying, 'What an ass you are! My neck would have been off long ago, if there were really a ghost. Don't you understand that the grandfather has only threatened us so that we might not get on the tree again?'



Narendra swinging with his head down

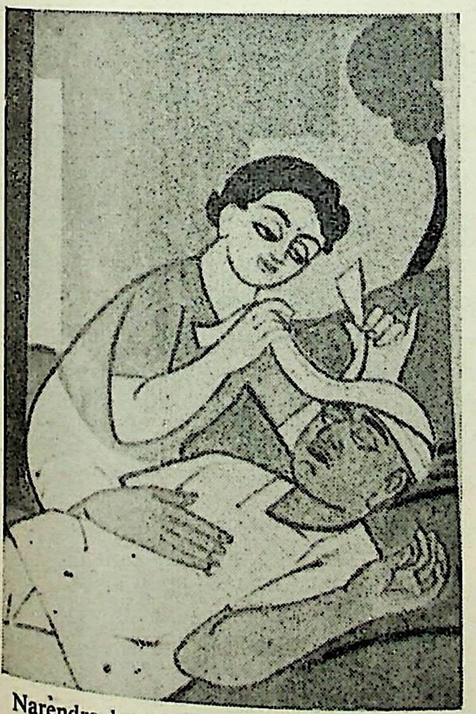
Narendra could prepare his lessons in a very short time, so he had plenty of leisure. He would daily discover new games and new ways of recreation. Some times he would go with his friends to see the Museum, at other times he would get up the Ochterlony Monument and so on. Every time, it is needless to say, he would be the leader of the party. One day, he, along with a few of his friends, started in a boat to visit the Nawab's Zoological Gardens at Metiabruz, a suburb of Calcutta. They were very happy to see the animals there. While returning, one of the boys became very sick due to the tossing of the boat and vomited in it. When they came near the shore of the Ganga, the boatman would not let them go unless they had cleaned the boat. But the boys were not willing to do it. When his friends and the boatman were quarrelling, Narendranath jumped on to the shore and came running to the main road where he espied two British soldiers passing by. He approached them, caught one of them by the hand and in his broken English explained to them the tale of their woe and almost dragged them to the scene. The soldiers understood everything and commanded the boatman in a threatening voice to let the lads go. The boatman was terribly afraid on seeing the British soldiers and set the boys free immediately. Thus, through Naren's courage and presence of



Narendra narrating the sad tale to the British soldiers

mind, the boys were saved from an embarrassing situation and had a hearty laugh over the incident.

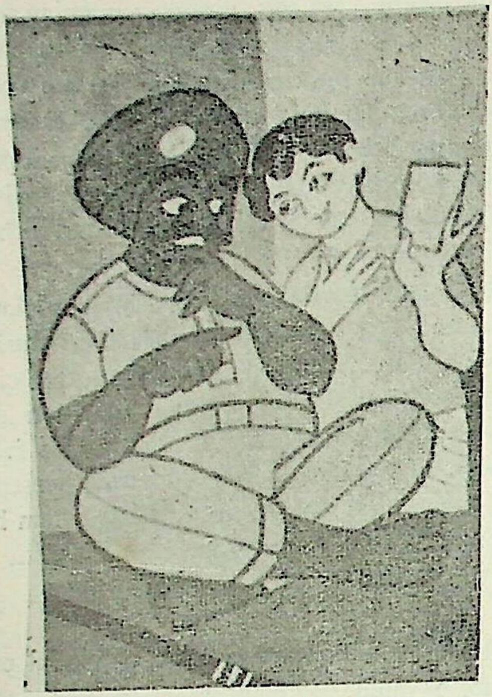
Narendranath used to regularly attend the gymnasium of Sri Navagopal Mitra, with his friends. Once, the young boys were trying to set up a big trapeze. A crowd gathered to see the fun but none came forward to help them. There was an English sailor also in the crowd; Narendranath beckoned him to come to their help. As the trapeze was being lifted, it slipped off their hands and knocked down the sailor unconscious. Thinking him to be dead, the other boys fled away but Narendra with great presence of mind tore away a piece of his cloth and bandaged the wound, sprinkled water on his face and started fanning him.



Narendra bandaging the wounded sailor

Gradually the sailor regained his consciousness and was removed to the neighbouring school-house. A doctor was called in, medicine was given and Narendra with all attention and kindness nursed him for a week, till he fully recovered, fed him and sent him away presenting him with a small purse, collected from his friends. What a humane touch and a spirit of service from such an early age!

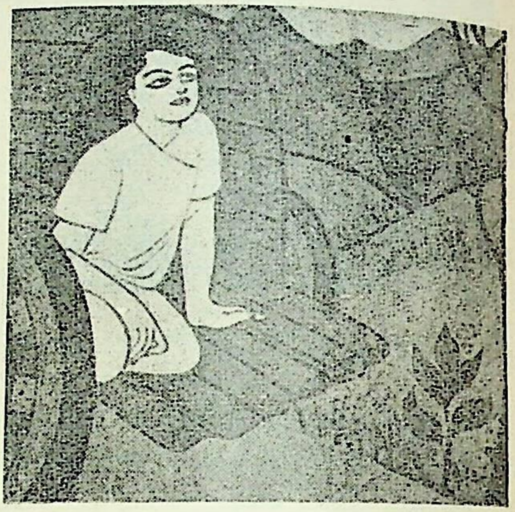
Here is another story of his wonderful presence of mind. He could never be discouraged nor dissuaded from what he would like to do. He would hit upon some plan and get his wish fulfilled. The British warship, Syrapis had arrived at Calcutta, with the visiting Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, on board. Naren's friends urged him to arrange for their visit to the Man-of-War. An English official was issuing permits to the intending visitors. His office was upstairs in a building at Chowringhee. Narendra with an application presented himself at the entrance. He was only eleven years of age then. Seeing him so young, the fearful looking *chaprasi* with long moustache and big turban on his head, frowned at him saying that he could not be allowed to go up. Narendra went round the building, saw a spiral staircase at the back. Undaunted he went up to the first floor by way of the spiral and stood in the queue. When his turn came, he saluted the officer, placed the application before him and got it signed by him. He was very happy and came down the main stair-case with his face beaming with the joy of success. The *chaprasi* was astonished to see him coming down and asked him, how he could manage to go up. Narendra, showing the order, replied with a proud smile, 'Oh, I am a magician'.



Narendra showing the permit to the *chaprasi*

We shall close this narration by mentioning one more incident.

In 1877 when Narendra was reading in the fourth form and was thirteen years old, he had to take his mother and sisters to Raipur in Central Provinces. They had to cross a long distance by bullock-cart through dense forests in the Vindhya range. The lofty hills on either side of the road, the verdant trees and creepers laden with beautiful flowers and the sweet chirping of the birds of different colours filled his heart with ineffable bliss. Suddenly, his eyes turned towards a beehive in a cleft in one of the hills. All these wonderful and enchanting scenes of natural beauty created a deep impression on his mind. Thinking in wonder of the majesty and power of the Divine Providence, he gradually lost all outward consciousness and lay in that state for a considerable period of time.



Narendra lost to outward consciousness seeing the natural beauty

The above incident shows how his spiritual insight was deepening. This was perhaps the first time when contemplating on the beauty of nature and thinking of the glory of the Lord, he ascended into the realm of the Unknown.

There are many other incidents, of his childhood and student life, which go to show that he was born with a definite mission to fulfil and to propagate a unique message for the redemption of mankind.

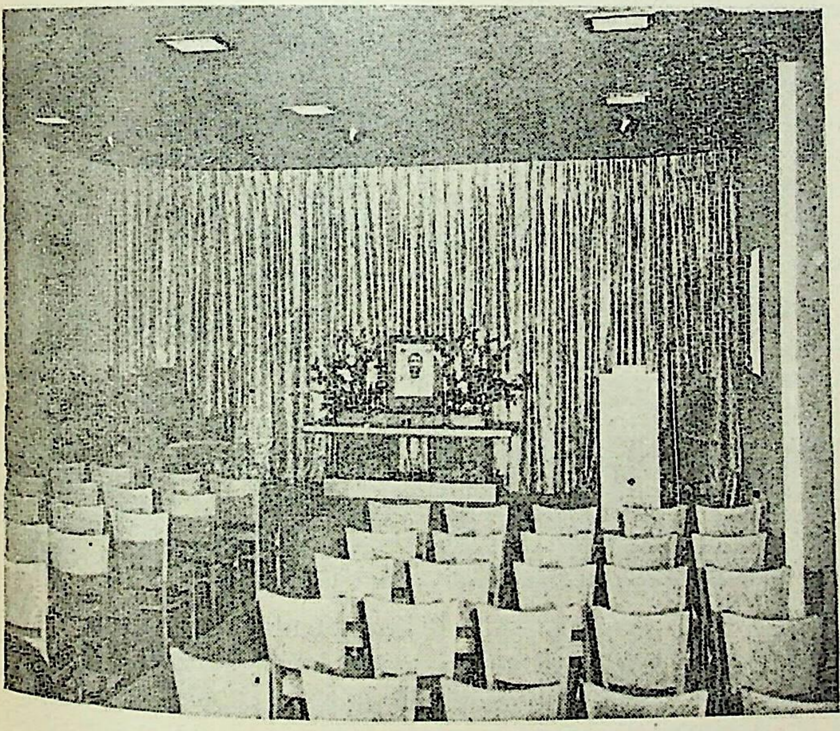
Did not Sri Ramakrishna commission him from among the great Saptarṣis (seven sages) to become his chief apostle?

N.B.—We are indebted to Sri Viswaranjan Chakravarti, M.A. of Calcutta from whose paintings the above blocks have been made. The paintings were made by him as a labour of love for decorating the Children's Library corner in the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Building at the Ramakrishna Math, Madras-4.

CENTRES OF THE RAMAKRISHNA ORDER IN THE WEST

Today we have in the West more than a dozen centres of the Ramakrishna Order. working for the propagation of the message of Swami Vivekananda, a message which Sri Ramakrishna lived, viz. (1) acceptance of all religions as true and as different pathways to God, and (2) the inherent divinity of man. This message was not peculiar to Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. It was the eternal message of the Vedas only relived and redemonstrated, before a forgetful world, over again. These ideas had gone out of India even earlier but mostly through books. This time Swami Vivekananda, the living Vedanta, went right into the market place, as it were, and gave it freely.

He travelled from one end of the United States of America to the other, lecturing and addressing gatherings, talking and discussing. Everywhere he went, the ideas, though perhaps new to many a one in the audience, attracted attention. Excepting among the bigoted they were well received. His personality, added to the rational outlook in his teachings captured a section of the intelligentsia. They requested the Swami to start a society where they could meet and discuss and keep the interest in the life of the spirit unflagging. Swamiji at their request started the Vedanta Society, of New York in 1894. This was the first centre of Vedanta in America. But the Swami could not be bound to any one place. He was not made for a small community. England called him. His own country was eagerly waiting for him. He was afraid that all his labours would go in vain if the society was not properly reared up. The members of the society too felt it. So to carry on his work in his absence, the Swami sent, in the first instance, for one of his brother disciples. Swami Saradananda came and some time later Swami Abhedananda also arrived in America. He left them in charge of the centres before returning to India in 1897. This was the nucleus of Swami Vivekananda's work in the West. Swami Saradananda returned to India, at the call of the leader, to shoulder the responsibility of the administration of the Ramakrishna Order. Swami Abhedananda lived in America for more than a quarter of a century preaching Vedanta.



The Vedanta Society, New York.

During his first visit to America Swamiji seems to have confined and concentrated his activities to the eastern states. Chicago, New York, Boston, Washington, Detroit, Swampscot, Greenacre, Baltimore, Brooklyn, Salem, were some of the towns where he worked as can be seen from a perusal of his letters and lectures now available.

On his second visit to the West, we see him mostly in the western states of America. Los Angeles, San Francisco, Pasadena, Alameda are some of the towns that appear predominantly in his correspondence. It was during this visit in 1900 that the Swami established the Vedanta Society of Northern California at San Francisco, and left Swami Turiyananda in charge of it. The latter had accompanied Swami Vivekananda from India to help him in his work at his earnest request. Introducing Swami Turiyananda to the students of San Francisco Vedanta Society, Swamiji had said, 'In me you have seen the expression of Kshatriya power, I am going to send you one who is the embodiment of Brahminical qualities, who represents what a Brahmin or the highest spiritual evolution of man is.'[1] The life of Swami Turiyananda left a deep impression on the minds of his students, a vivid account of which we get in the book, *With the Swamis in America.*

A gift of a 160 acres plot of land in San Antone Valley for a retreat, made by a Vedanta student of New York, to Swami Vivekananda, became the first retreat where students of the San Francisco Vedanta Society spent their intense life of the spirit with Swami Turiyananda. But Swami Turiyananda's health broke down on account of the strenuous life. It was decided that he was to return to India for recuperation of health, and specially as he had a desire to see the beloved leader. Swami Vivekananda, however, had passed away before Swami Turiyananda reached Calcutta. When it was known that Swami Turiyananda would return to India Swamiji asked Swami Trigunatitananda, who was working single-handed for the *Udbodhan,* the Bengali organ of the Order, to go to San Francisco. Swami Trigunatita agreed but his departure to the West was delayed by the sudden passing away of Swami Vivekananda on 4th July, 1902. He sailed for America *via* the Pacific and reached San Francisco on January 2, 1903.

The home of Mr. and Mrs. C. F. Peterson was for a time the headquarters of the Society but in March 1903, a flat was taken to provide larger space for classes and lectures. The work of the Society had by 1904 grown so enormously that Swami Trigunatita felt the Society should have its own building. With the Swami to think was to act. A committee was soon formed, funds were raised, a plot of land was purchased and the work on the building commenced. By the end of 1905, the building which was to be the first Hindu Temple in the whole of the West was an accomplished fact. The dedication ceremony took place on January 7, 1906, 'and the first services were held on Sunday, January 15.'

The peace retreat in San Antone Valley was utilized every year by the Swami until his sudden and accidental death on January 10, 1914.

The Society now has two other centres, one at Berkeley and another at Sacramento. Besides, in San Francisco itself, the Society has built a spacious new Temple to accommodate the growing congregation. This temple was dedicated during the Durga Puja of 1959. It has apart from the Shanti Ashrama, two more retreats, one on Lake Tahoe, Sierra Nevada mountains, the other at Olema an hour's drive from San Francisco.[2]

Ever since Swami Vivekananda toured the American and European continents there has been a rising demand to know about the eternal message of the Vedanta. The Ramakrishna Order has been trying its utmost to meet the demands. Steadily the number of centres have increased from two to nine main centres, with a few more branch centres, in the United States of America alone. It will be interesting to note that most of them have grown round places where Swami Vivekananda worked. This is not however to minimize in any way the strenuous efforts put in by the pioneers of the new centres. Swamiji had sowed the seeds no doubt; but there is always the need to water them, help them grow. And this is hard labour indeed.

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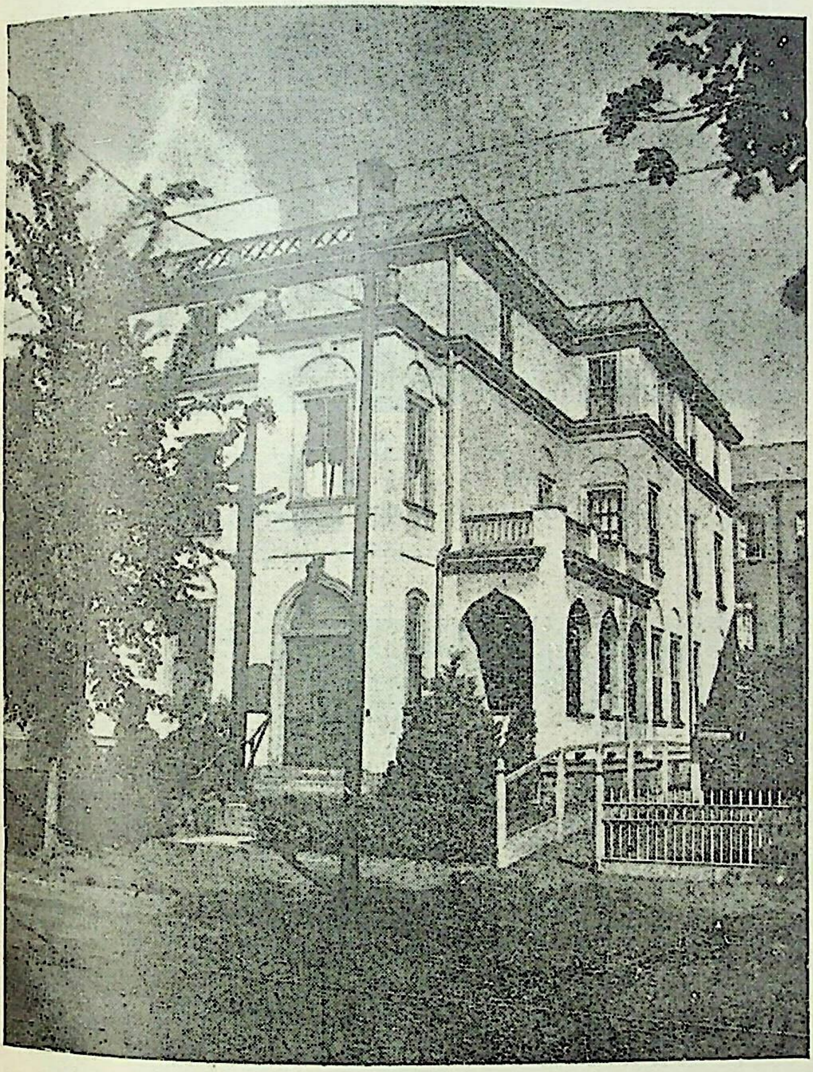
[1] The Disciples of Ramakrishna, Pub. Advaita Ashrama, Calcutta. p. 207.

[2] For pictures of the Old and New Temples of San Francisco, the Berkeley Center and the Olema Retreat, see opposite pages 226 and 227.

New York today has two centres, one started by Swami Vivekananda, the other The Ramakrishna - Vivekananda Center founded by Swami Nikhilananda in 1933 of which he continues to be the head. One of his greatest services to America was to acquire and preserve as a place of pilgrimage the cottage[3] where Swami Vivekananda lived during the summer of 1895, teaching a selected band of followers to live Vedanta and from where two of his memorable works, viz. *The Song of the Sannyasin,* and *The Inspired Talks*[4], had originated.



The Vedanta Center, Providence.

The Vedanta Society of Providence (R.I.) was started by Swami Akhilananda in 1928 and the present home (see picture on the left) was received as a donation and dedicated in 1931. Swami Akhilananda was the head of the Centre till his passing away in September 1962.

Swami Akhilananda also started a Ramakrishna Vedanta Society in Boston (Massachusetts) in the year 1941 and shortly after, the Society received as gift its commodius home at 58, Deerfield Street on the Charles River (see next page). The Society has a retreat, the Sarada Ashrama, on an extensive plot of land at Marshfield, close to the Atlantic ocean, 30 miles from Boston.

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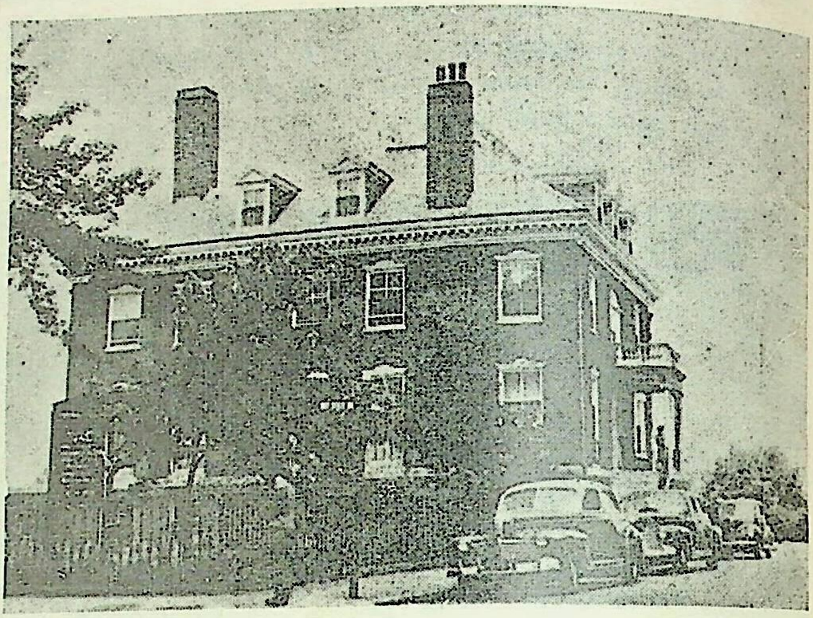
[3] See pages 251-256 for the history of Thousand Island Park and of the Vivekananda Cottage by Dr. Malcolm Willis.

[4] See article by Swami Atmaghanananda, pages 193 to 198, for notes of I. T. by one of the students of Swamiji, as they were taken down at that time.

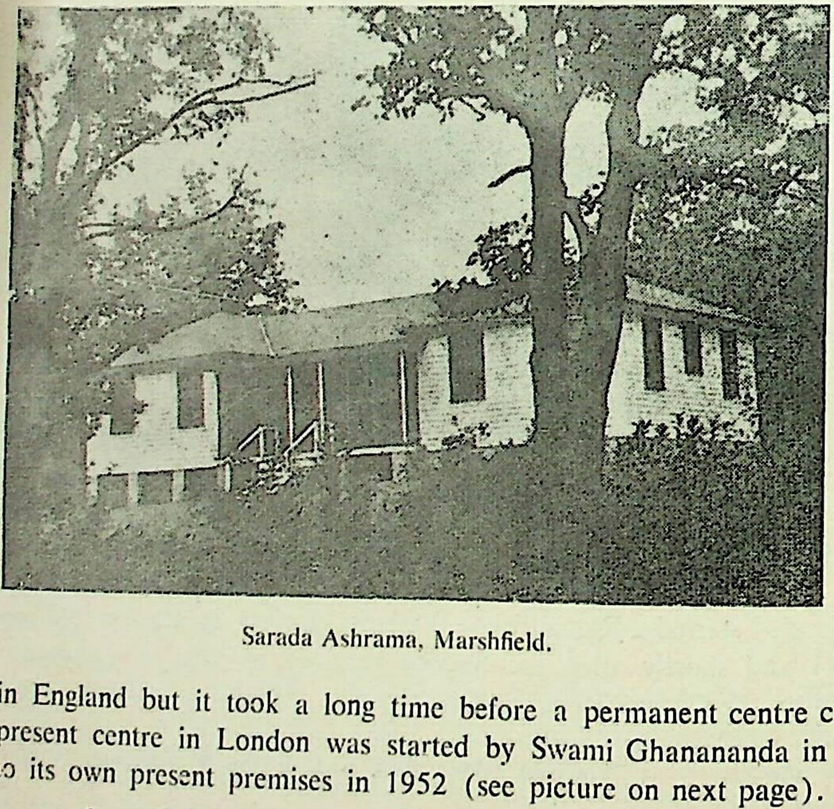
The Vivekananda Vedanta Society of Chicago (Illinois) was started by Swami Jnaneswarananda in the year 1930.

In 1938, the Vedanta Society of St. Louis, came into being with the efforts of Swami Satprakashananda and after 14 years, in 1952, it moved to its own premises.



Ramakrishna Vedanta Society, Boston.

The Vedanta Society of Southern California, Hollywood, was started by Swami Prabhavananda in 1930. It has a monastery at Trabuco Canyon, and a Math for Women at Santa Barbara, 86 miles from Los Angeles. A few young men and women have joined the monastery and the Women's Math respectively during the past few years.

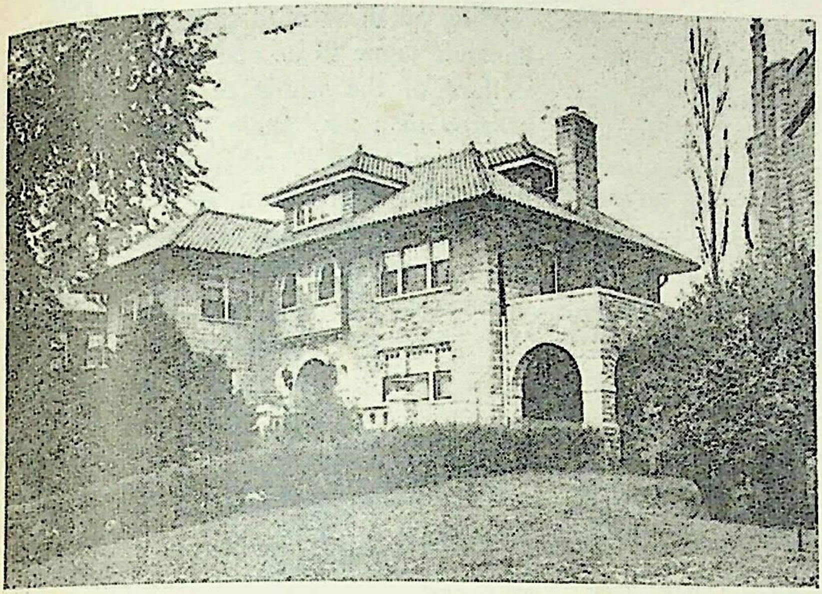


Sarada Ashrama, Marshfield.

The Ramakrishna Order has one centre in Argentina, South America, which was started in 1933 by Swami Vijayananda, who continues to be its head. It is the only centre in the Latin American countries so far. The centre known as the Ramakrishna Ashrama, at Buenos Aires has its own home from 1941.

England as we have seen had also claimed the attention of Swami Vivekananda. He had great hopes of his work in England but it took a long time before a permanent centre came into being there. The present centre in London was started by Swami Ghanananda in the year 1948 and moved to its own present premises in 1952 (see picture on next page).

Swami Vivekananda visited Paris more than once. He had great admiration for French art. A nucleus for a centre in Paris was formed by Swami Yatiswarananda in 1936. The following year Swami Siddheswarananda took up the work. It has now its own property at Gretz, Seine et Marne, about 22 miles from Paris.



Vedanta Society of St. Louis, U.S.A.

A Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre has been started in October, 1958 at Geneva, Switzerland by Swami Nityabodhananda.

The work in the West consists mainly in the propagation of Vedanta as lived and revivified by Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, by holding classes, discourses, and giving interviews to genuine seekers. Swami Vivekananda has thus created a permanent interest in the West towards Vedantic thought. Thousands if not millions, have been and are being benefited by the message of Vedanta, and this is why the whole world today pays homage to the modern apostle of Vedanta, Swami Vivekananda on the occasion of his birth centenary. We are sure if mankind heeds this message it can, in spite of the dark clouds of uncertainty hanging round it, survive.

Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, London.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND INDIAN CULTURE

(*Continued from Page* 312)

inherent in man, so that humanity as a whole may, without dissension, live in peace. Times have changed. It will not do now to hug to our bosom old narrow ideas of gain for 'one's country' at the cost of others' and be fanatic about 'one's religion'. All narrow barriers are breaking down, and the whole humanity is becoming one at the present time. Will not the narrow conception of racialism and bigotry about religion die even after observing the present day trend! Our purpose in relating all these is to state that Swami Vivekananda came to us and lived with us for the welfare of the whole of humanity. He has ushered in a new angle of vision from which we should assess religion and nationalism. And this is the reason we look upon him as an image of Sri Ramakrishna — an embodiment of all religions, one who realized the significance of the Veda Mantra 'Truth is One, sages call it differently.'

(*To be continued*)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

ABOUT THIS NUMBER

We have in this number, which is dedicated to Swamiji on the occasion of his birth centenary, endeavoured to place before our readers some aspects of his many-sided personality. We hope it will create interest in the readers, who are not acquainted with his thoughts and life to know more about him and in those already acquainted a desire to have a firmer grasp of his ideas. The life and works of these spiritual personalities do not reveal themselves at a first glance or on a casual reading. They require to be read and re-read and more than that they require us to create a spiritual background before we can hope to know them. The more we feel a taste for the life of the spirit, the more light shall issue forth from their teachings.

And to know a divine being we cannot but take the help of another divine being. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'Only a jeweller can appraise the true value of a diamond.' So to know about Swamiji it will aid us a great deal if we know what Sri Ramakrishna said of him. We have, therefore, begun this number with a few extracts from the sayings of Sri Ramakrishna. What a lofty place Sri Ramakrishna gave Swami Vivekananda can be noted even from these few sayings. His love for the disciple was unique and has not a parallel in history. His very presence would sometimes throw the Master into ecstasy. It was in his care that Sri Ramakrishna left his young disciples. As it will be interesting to see how the brother-disciples looked upon their leader, we have appended some of their sayings which, of course, by no means are exhaustive. For fuller details we call the attention of the readers to the source books from where the quotations have been culled out.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS.

Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras observed the hundred and first birth anniversary of Swami Ramakrishnananda on July 19, 1963 with Mangalarati, Puja, Homa and feeding of Daridranarayanas. The public function which came off on July 21 started with Harikatha by Sri T. S. Balakrishna Sastrigal, (3-30 p.m. to 5-15 p.m.). The meeting with Sri T. L. Venkatarama Iyer, Ex-Judge, Supreme Court, in the chair started at 5-30 p.m. Swami Kailasananda, President, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras spoke in English. Swami Nishkamananda, President, Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Ootacamund, spoke in Tamil; after which the president of the meeting addressed the gathering. The meeting came to a close with a vote of thanks by Sri S. Parthasarathy, Secretary, Vivekananda College, Madras. After the evening Aratrikam there was bhajan for about an hour, by the sadhus and devotees of the Math led by Swami Priyananda.

.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
Swami Vivekananda

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. L SEPTEMBER 1963 No. 5

PANCADAŚĪ

स बोधो विषयाद्भिन्नो न बोधात्स्वप्नबोधवत् । एवं स्थानत्रयेऽप्येका संवित्तद्वद्दिनान्तरे ॥ ६ ॥

Saḥ, that (of the deep sleep) ; *bodhaḥ*, knowledge ; *viṣayāt*, from the object of experience ; *bhinnaḥ*, different ; *na*, not ; *bodhāt*, from (other) knowledge ; *swapnabodhavat*, like the knowledge in the dream state. *Evam*, in this way ; *sthānatrayé*, in the three states ; *api*, also ; *samvit*, knowledge (consciousness) ; *ekā*, (is) one. *Tadvat*, similarly ; *dināntare*, on any other day.

The knowledge of ignorance in deep sleep is different from ignorance itself.[1] But it is non-diffferent from other knowledge, as for instance knowledge of the dream state. Thus as in all the three states experienced on a single day the consciousness or knowledge is one, so also it is on any other day.[2]

[1] We have seen in the previous verse that in *suṣupti* we experience only ignorance, in the sense we do not know anything about the outside world. Even the mind in that state goes to rest. Only the consciousness is always awake and that is why a person getting up from deep sleep says, 'I slept well, and did not know anything.' The author of the *Pancadaśī* makes it clear that the knowledge in all the states is the same, though it differs from the object of knowledge.

[2] In all the three states experienced on any other day also the consciousness is the same. The three states are : waking, dream and deep sleep.

मासाब्दयुगकल्पेषु गतागम्येष्वनेकधा । नोदेति नास्तमेत्येका संविदेषा स्वयंप्रभा ॥ ७ ॥

Anekadhā, in various ways ; *gatāgamyeṣu*, in the past and the future ; *māsa*, month ; *abda*, year ; *yuga*, age ; *kalpéṣu*, in the cycles. *Ekā*, one ; *samvit*, consciousness ; *na*, not ; *udéti*, rises ; *nāstaméti*, does not vanish or perish. *Eṣā*, this (consciousness) ; *swayamprabhā*, self-luminous.

The consciousness which in various ways was in the past and will be in the future, in months, years, ages and cycles is one. This consciousness is neither born nor does it perish. It is self-luminous.

PRAYER

With all the pride of civilization and with all the scientific advancement man still, sometimes, finds himself in situations in which neither of these could help him. Why is it so? What then is the purpose of a civilization that cannot stand us in good stead when we are in dire need of help? What is wanting in our civilization that makes it impotent in the face of calamities? Again it has been observed that an inordinate tension exists, specially, in the minds of people who do not lack luxuries nor are in dearth of variety in entertainments. If material benefits and wealth alone could have been the source of illimitable happiness, then why do we find misery in the lap of luxury? These are questions that are engaging the minds of the intelligentsia today. One modern thinker aptly asks, 'Has civilization been able to end poverty, starvation and war?' The very fact that these questions are making headway and demand immediate attention is in itself an indication that all is not well with our civilization; something is lacking, wanting. The causes are to be analysed and treated with utmost deliberation and speed.

Our analysis would be, that humanity has been fed, for over three centuries now, with doctrines which teach elimination of the spiritual aspect in man. Man has been asked to subsist on the dry bones of logic, with the consequence that a maladjusted and malformed strata has emerged in society. There is a mythical story in the Indian epics, the conclusion of which may bear a striking resemblance to this strata. Let us state it briefly: There was a king named Trishanku. By his misbehaviour he earned the wrath of his spiritual preceptor. However, when he desired to go to heaven in his physical frame he approached the latter to help him. The preceptor would not agree to perform any such sacrilegious sacrifice. He plainly told him that it was impossible for a human being to reach heaven in a mortal body. Dissatisfied with his answer the king went to the preceptor's sons and craved their help. Coming to know of his audacity to approach them when their respected father had refused help, they cursed him that he may be dull in mind, lose lustre and be of uncouth appearance. Sorely disappointed but not still cowed down, he approached a teacher, who had lived in antagonism to his family guru, and poured out to him his tale of woe. That preceptor did indeed help him to go to heaven; but the gods looking at his ugly mien banished him and thrust him out. He fell head downwards from there to the earth. As he fell he cried out to his benefactor to save him. The preceptor, who was no doubt a man of great powers, asked him to stay where he was. The story tells us that he stayed, but in a place neither here nor there and certainly not in an enviable state. It is said that he still continues to hang with his head down in between the heaven and the earth. That is the precarious condition in which the above mentioned strata of society finds itself today. But fortunately the disease has not yet touched the common man. He has still not lost his moorings. He has belief in a higher Being, to whom he can unload his worries. He has faith that the Lord will answer his prayers if he but truly calls on Him.

There are three things in man which clamour for satisfaction, the body, the mind and the spirit. But the basis of all is the spirit. It is the neglect of the spirit that makes any civilization lame and uncertain about its future. It may for a time appear to thrive but then when it fails, it does so miserably, leaving only broken ramparts and moss-filled moats to display its onetime vain glory in all its sadness. Yet, no one questions one's right to serve one's body or mind. None can deny the value of a healthy body, nor of a sharp intellect; both are necessary. But what is hinted at is that they should not be made exclusive pursuits. The other side (the spirit) also is to be cultivated.

Several paths to the cultivation of the spirit

And this cultivation of the spirit can be done in several ways, viz. by control of the *Prana* (vital force), by doing work unattached to results, by knowledge of the Self, and by devotion or love of God. Our subject brings us to the last path in particular but it also includes others in a general way. We all know the path of devotion or love of God is meant for persons whose nature is predominantly emotional in character. But let us not be carried away by the thought that we can be exclusively emotional or exclusively rationalistic. It is not possible. A human being is a conglomeration of many faculties. Even the murderous dacoit who is supposed to be cruelty personified, has a soft side to his nature. Perhaps he murders and loots for the maintenance of a loving family at home. So is the case with every other faculty. All the faculties are present in man, only the degree of manifestation of each varies in different persons. According to the degree of manifestation of a particular faculty, one's nature is said to be emotional, rationalistic or active. A man without feelings would be inert, like wood or stone. And a mere emotional man without strength to work, nor intellect to discriminate can only be a nervous wreck. And certainly religion does not propose to turn men into wood or stone nor into nincompoops. To an emotional nature, however, worship, singing of devotional songs, and prayer appeal most. He can make rapid progress in spiritual life by having recourse to these.

What is prayer

Prayer is a supplication to a higher power, invoking blessings or forgiveness for transgressions, trespasses and errors committed. Used in the religious sense however, it has been branded as superstition. But why? Do not men when they are in tribulations or when they want to obtain the grace of a great person, wait on him? Do they not supplicate in the most abject fashion? Prayer, entreaty, supplication are therefore not unknown to man. But the idea seems to be that it is all right if they do it for material gains but it is bad when people do it for spiritual upliftment! Is this not a perverted way of viewing at things? If such an attitude is kept up, we can never arrive at the true perspective of things. First, therefore, be bold enough to apply the same standard of judgment to yourself as you would like to apply it to others. Ponder over it, study it and you will find that in what terms the man of the world prays for worldly things, in the very same terms or even more honourable, the man of the spirit prays for enlightenment. Why then should it be called superstition?

Universal prayers

It now remains to be discerned whether prayers universal in character exist or can be evolved? What type of prayers can be universal? Hinduism consists of so many sects but there are some fundamentals which are common to all of them. Every sect believes in the authority of the Vedas. The Vedas, which include the Vedanta or the Upanishads, have given us some of the most wonderful prayers which can be chanted by anyone, living anywhere without the least fear of losing their affinity to their own religion. Here for instance, we have the peace incantation which a student offers everyday before he begins his studies: 'Om. Lead me from the unreal unto the real, from darkness unto light, from death unto immortality.'[1] The student prays for enlightenment, to walk in the path of god, to endear himself to Him. God being the only reality he wants Him. God being the only light of all lights he wants to walk in His light. There being no mortality in God he wants to live in Him. A doubt may arise: Where do we live now? Do not the scriptures say we live, move and have our being in Him? True. But are we conscious of it? Not being conscious of it, is darkness. Not being conscious of it, again, is unreality. Do not the scriptures say, 'All this is Brahman'? So this prayer is only to make us conscious of it, at all times and under all circumstances. When man is conscious in this way, consistently and constantly, he is said to have realized God. Then he sees God inside and outside of himself. Thus did our ancient culture lay the basis of our education. From a very early period children were taught to think rightly, as can be seen from this prayer. The peace that the student invokes again, is not for himself alone, it is for the whole society.

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[1] ॐ असतो मा सद्गमय, तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय,
मृत्योर्माऽमृतं गमय।

Did not then the student ask anything for himself? Yes, he did ask. He even asks for health to enjoy life — only in the righteous way, not at the cost of others, nor in a beastly fashion. He prays: 'O gods, may we hear with our ears, only what is auspicious; may we see what is only auspicious with our eyes O ye worshipful ones; may we sing praises to ye, and by our strong body and limbs may we enjoy the life allotted to us by the gods. May there be peace.'[2] Again: 'Let my speech be established in my mind and mind be established in speech. O self-manifested One do Thou manifest Thyself unto me. May my mind and speech be efficient to reveal the highest knowledge. May I not forget what I have heard. By what I have learnt I shall support myself by day and by night. I will speak the right. I will speak the truth. May That Divinity protect me. May it protect the preceptor.'[3] Here are two of the many Vedic prayers which are of the most general character. There is nothing debasing in them nor covetousness of any sort. The desire to enjoy also is circumscribed and conditioned. He wants protection only if and when he walks in the righteous path. The aim, however, is realization of God. The saints and sages of a later period too have sung paeans of a similar nature, one of which, because of its all-embracing character, we can hardly resist the temptation to quote: 'May all be blissful, may all be free from diseases, may all see what is auspicious, may not any one be miserable.'[4] What a grand conception! Does it not make us—at least for the short time that we will be repeating it or dwelling on it—feel one with the universe, feel the affinity to every creature that is in the creation? Is it wrong to wish for the welfare of the whole universe? If not, how can such prayers be called superstitions?

There are, of course, other prayers by worshippers of different aspects of God in praise of the particular forms of the Deity. In all of them the same inner current of love of God and a desire to open out, to expand beyond one's own self can be seen.

Is prayer necessary for all types of aspirants?

We shall now revert to our proposition that prayer is necessary and forms an important element of spiritual life. From the universal character of the prayers, above quoted, it is clear that there can be no gainsaying the fact that they are beneficial to all types of aspirants. If a man is of active temperament his desiring to do good will receive added strength from wishing well to every being. A question may arise in our minds as to the necessity of prayer for a man devoted to the path of knowledge. But we forget that it is he who studies the scriptures most and these scriptures enjoin the chanting of the peace incantations before they are studied. Again, it is by repeating the texts which speak of the evanescence of the world and by reminding oneself of them constantly that one discriminates between the real and the unreal. There are a myriad of them — the hymns that speak of the glory of the Self. We shall give here only one instance of it. It is a morning prayer which runs as follows: 'I meditate at dawn within my heart on the Self-effulgent Ātman, the Existence-Consciousness-Bliss Absolute, the goal of the supreme ascetics, transcendental and eternal, who is beyond the states of waking, dream and deep sleep. That Brahman I am, not a combination of material elements.'[5]

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[2] ॐ भद्रं कर्णेभिः श्रृणुयाम देवाः
भद्रं पश्येमाक्षभिर्यजत्राः ।
स्थिरैरङ्गैस्तुष्टुवांसस्तनूभिर्
व्यशेम देवहितं यदायुः
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः ॥

[3] ॐ वाङ्‌ मे मनसि प्रतिष्ठिता मनो मे वाचि प्रतिष्ठितम् । आविराविर्म एधि । वेदस्य म आणीस्थः । श्रुतं मे मा प्रहासीः अनेनाधीतेनाहोरात्रान्सन्दधामि । ऋतं वदिष्यामि । सत्यं वदिष्यामि । तन्मामवतु । तद्वक्तारमवतु । अवतु माम् । अवतु वक्तारमवतु वक्तारम् ।

[4] सर्वे भवन्तु सुखिनः सर्वे सन्तु निरामयाः ।
सर्वे. भद्राणि पश्यन्तु मा कश्चिद्दुःखभाग्भवेत् ।

Then comes the prayer to the preceptor, who is the manifest form of God on earth. He it is who ferries us across the ocean of *samsara* and therefore we are in duty bound to express our gratitude and adoration to him.

Prayers exist in every language and in every part of the world, maybe in poetical form, maybe in plain prose. Even the illiterate have them, handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation in the form of folk songs. Sri Ramakrishna set great store by prayer as a spiritual discipline. He emphasized its necessity and efficacy time and again. He has taught us how to pray, by himself setting an example. As to the form of address he was not particular. He said, 'God like a benevolent father would understand in whatever way you call on Him, and in whichever way you address Him.' Only thing he insisted on was sincerity in our prayer. When someone had suggested that people should be taught how to look upon God, Sri Ramakrishna's characteristic remark had been, 'Who can truly know God? He is One, He is many; again, He is beyond both. One glass of water is enough to slake my thirst, why should I want to know how many gallons of water is in the reservoir? So call upon God in any way you like and even if you do not know what He is, do not despair, pray to Him, "O Lord I know not whether you are with form or formless, please condescend to reveal yourself to me." This form of prayer would appeal to everyone, even unbelievers saw nothing objectionable in this. They prayed. Their prayers were answered. Thus were they converted and won over to God by Sri Ramakrishna. 'O Lord, I have attributed forms to Thee, who art formless, in my meditation. By my praise O Thou Teacher of the Universe I have denied Thy indescribableness. By going on pilgrimage and such other things, I have repudiated Thy omnipresence. These three trespasses of mine, O Lord, pray forgive me,'[6] sings a devotee bringing to the fore the incomprehensibleness of God. Therefore instead of trying to know what God is, let us try to gain admittance to His presence.

What should we pray for

People pray no doubt, but what do they pray for? Usually most of the people want something from God and that is why they pray. Progeny, wealth and the like are some of their positive wants. Getting rid of diseases, overcoming tribulations are some of the negative wants that they desire God to fulfil. But is that what we should pray for? Definitely not. Sri Ramakrishna's prayer in this respect is an eye-opener. He prays to the Divine Mother: 'Mother here is Thy virtue, here is Thy vice, take them both and give me pure love for Thee.' He did not want anything except devotion for the Mother's feet. Swami Vivekananda prayed for discrimination, renunciation, knowledge and love of God, even when the billows of domestic calamities were closing over his head. That is the proper type of prayer — to want nothing except God, desire nothing except His presence.

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[5] प्रातःस्मरामि हृदि संस्फुरदात्मतत्त्वं
सच्चित्सुखं परमहंसगतिं तुरीयम् ।
यत्स्वप्नजागरसुषुप्तमवैति नित्यं
तद्ब्रह्म निष्कलमहं न च भूतसङ्घः ॥

[6] रूपं रूपविवर्जितस्य भवतो ध्यानेन यत्कल्पितम् ।
स्तुत्यानिर्वाचिताखिलगुरो दूरिकृता यन्मया ।
व्यापित्वञ्च निराकृतं भगवतो यत्तीर्थयात्रादिना ।
क्षन्तव्यं जगदीश तद्विकलतादोषत्रयं मत्कृतम् ॥

Efficacy of Prayer

What is the science behind this prayer, that is, how does it actually act? First of all it is to be remembered that God is not someone who is far, far away, that He is very close to us.[7] Much of the difficulty we experience now to comprehend the efficacy of prayer will be got over if we recall this. He is the Soul of our souls. He dwells in our hearts.[8] Who else can then be more aware of our thoughts, our desires, our intentions and our resolutions than He? Will He then, when He hears our call, not respond? As a loving father He will. So those who trust in God carry their load lightly. A tranquillity spreads over their souls. They neither seek nor avoid company. Human sympathy, they do not desire. For it is so volatile that at the first whiff of the winds of misfortune it all evaporates. But we can depend upon the Lord's succour. He never deserts. He remains constant. We may even make our demands on Him as does a son for his patrimony says Sri Ramakrishna. This however, can be done only if we get to know Him intimately. So through prayer and other disciplines we have to make our way to His citadel, and then everything will be all right.

The Lord finds Himself bound by the ties of love when the devotee prays to Him. Nay, He finds that He owes to the devotee a deep debt and finds Himself entangled in a bond that is indissoluble. Speaking about His love for the Pandavas Sri Krishna says: 'The obligations on My part have ever grown and they can never be repaid, the gratitude can never be taken away from My heart.'[9] Draupadi prayed in anguish to Him for help knowing full well that Krishna was far away at that time. But her prayer was answered. The love of the Pandavas to the Lord even in their direst of calamities has very few parallels. That is why Krishna later says to Duryodhana: 'The Pandavas whom you hate O king are my life breath.'[10]

Earnestness in Prayer

Generally people want to gain much with little effort, so when they find their prayers—which are naturally half-hearted and endowed with little faith—are not answered, they give up and turn agnostics. They say: 'Oh this prayer and all such things are mere superstition! I have done it all without any result.' But actually had they been earnest in their prayer they would have had a different story to tell. No considerations of wealth or personal gain would have crept into their minds then. An instance of the type of love that asks nothing except for God Himself is that of the gopis, the cowherdesses of Vrindavana —theirs was not trading in love as Swami Vivekananda beautifully puts it. It was a dedication. And when such dedication comes the prayer that comes to one's lips is a spontaneous one, it wells up as it were from the heart. It is untainted by selfish consideration. The lives of the saints and seers are instances to show what prayer—which is natural to man —can do. Let not false pride stand in our way of prayer, nor let us pray for the sake of ostentatiousness. May we in true faith take to prayer.

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[7] तद्दूरे तद्वन्तिके ॥ *Isa Up.* 5.

[8] ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
Gita, 18. 61.

[9] ऋणं एतत् प्रवृद्धं मे हृदयान्मापसर्पति ।

[10] पाण्डवान् द्विषसे राजन् मम प्राणा हि पाण्डवाः ।

SO-CALLED CONTRADICTIONS IN SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S TEACHINGS

(Continued from the previous issue)

SWAMI ŚUDDHANANDA

Once when the monastery was situated at the Nilambar Mukherji's garden house, Swamiji was exhorting the young Swamis and Brahmacharins thus : 'Throw away all books and scriptures. What benefit can accrue to you from them regarding your spiritual life ? Live an intense life of *sādhana* so that you may realize God even in this life. Those of you who are inclined to Jñānam, let them try to discriminate between the real and the unreal according to the teachings of the Vedanta — let them be engaged in Vichara (discrimination) day and night — let them not take part in Puja, Bhajan or Kirtan. Let also those inclined towards bhakti not mix at all with these would-be jñānis, but let them perform Bhajan, Kirtan and have all the paraphernalia of worship day and night. Let some of you make a hundred clay images of Shiva, and going to the side of the Ganges with a towel on the head as a protection against the heat of the sun, worship them the whole day. In this way, try to develop your respective spiritual nature as quickly as possible by special methods according to the temperament of each individual and waste no more time, my children.' One young Brahmacharin was so much impressed by these daily exhortations that he felt strongly inclined to shortly leave the monastery and go to some lonely place, such as the Himalayas, for practising *sādhana*, as he considered the monastery too crowded a place for acting according to Swamiji's advice. He secured also Swamiji's permission and blessings to go away from the monastery. Previous to his departure, however, he had to make some preparation ; he had to finish some important work at the Math, which Swamiji had entrusted to him. But at times, he would feel strongly inclined to leave the work unfinished and fly away, though by the sheer force of will he controlled himself and wanted to finish the work as soon as possible. This and some other things regarding arrangements about his departure took some time. In the meanwhile there was a panic at Calcutta on account of the bubonic plague and the strict measures taken by the Government to prevent its spread. Swamiji who was on a short trip to Darjeeling for his health, hastened to the monastery to start plague relief work. He wrote a short Bengali pamphlet and arranged for its distribution. It contained appeals to the citizens of Calcutta asking them not to be carried away by panic, but to have faith in God, to be strict in observing hygienic rules and to seek any help from the Math whenever necessary. Swamiji even thought and talked of selling the newly purchased site of the monastery, if necessary, to finance any practical measure for combating the scourge. Arrangements were made to cleanse some *bustees* of Calcutta with the help of volunteers recruited from amongst the monastic disciples. Swami Trigunatita, a Gurubhai of Swamiji, was enlisting volunteers for the plague relief. One day he told the Brahmacharin who had secured Swamiji's permission for Tapasya that he had also been chosen as one of the volunteers and Swamiji himself had approved of the selection. The young Brahmacharin was greatly taken aback by the announcement. He told Swami Trigunatita that since Swamiji had ordered like that he must obey, but his mind was so much fixed upon Tapasya that he felt inclined to pray that the plague relief work might come at once to him, so that after finishing it as soon as possible, he would be free to go out for Tapasya. At this Swami Trigunatita consulted Swamiji and gave out that Swamiji had exempted him from the plague relief service.

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Another incident happening a little earlier is worth mentioning. It occurred towards the end of 1897. After his brilliant lectures on Vedanta at Lahore, Swamiji had come to Dehra Dun with some of his Gurubhais and monastic disciples. A garden house had been rented for him. The Mayavati Ashrama in the Himalayas had not been then started. Swamiji was trying to find a suitable place in the hills to found an Ashrama with the financial help of Captain and Mrs. Sevier. A young boy servant had been engaged on a small pay to cleanse the utensils and do other domestic works. After about eight or ten days we moved to Saharanpur. No suitable place was found near Dehra Dun to start an Ashrama. At that time there was no railway line up to Dehra Dun. The only means of transport from Saharanpur to Dehra Dun, a distance of 40 miles, was tonga service. Some four of us came beforehand to Saharanpur on foot. When some hours later Swamiji with the remaining party reached Saharanpur, we found to our astonishment that the boy-servant had accompanied him. As soon as he reached Saharanpur, he told us, 'Don't call the boy a *Nokar* (servant) but call him a Brahmacharin and behave with him as such.' To the local gentlemen assembled he said, 'I went to Dehra Dun in search of a suitable place for an Ashrama and I have failed in my special object of visit there. But the Mother has given me this boy so that I may train him and make of him a real man.' At Delhi where we soon removed, the boy who was dirty in the extreme was washed and cleaned by a Sannyasi disciple of Swamiji with his own hands with soap and hot water. He was supplied with decent clothes purchased from Delhi bazar, was given the sacred thread and Gayatri (as the boy gave out that he belonged to Kshatriya caste) through a Brahmin Brahmachari disciple of Swamiji; and a Hindi primer was purchased and put into his hands. From Delhi the boy accompanied us to Alwar, Jeypore and Khetri and was treated in all respects as equal to any of our party. But all this kindness and attention of Swamiji was of no avail. We found to our regret that his past *samskaras* prevailed to an extraordinary degree. He could himself never forget that he was a mere servant boy and scarcely understood the significance of the sacred thread. All these however, Swamiji overlooked 'probably' in the hope that gradually the influence of better environments would prevail over his old samskaras. But at Khetri when he told a deliberate lie to Swamiji, he could not tolerate it any longer. He instructed us as soon as we came back to Delhi to send him back to his native place of Kashmir. And it was done.

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Very little did I hear personally about politics from Swamiji's own lips except a few stray remarks. About the scope and significance of politics for India, one day I heard Swamiji say, 'Our idea of politics is this: Under the present social and political conditions of India, it has been possible for the advent of only one Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. We shall have to adjust our social and political environments in such a way, that it will be possible for many such Ramakrishna Paramahamsas to arise from the soil of India.' At another time Swamiji remarked, 'The political bondage of India has suppressed many would-be geniuses and have condemned them to mediocrity. If India were politically free, many great personages and geniuses would have sprung up from the soil like mushrooms.' He laughed at the optimism of the politicians of the day, who apparently believed that the British had come to India with the most altruistic object of ameliorating its conditions, and so their only programme was the passing of some pious resolutions and petitioning the Government to do this or that without even thinking of any constructive work for the people and by the people, independent of Government aid. He said, 'These simple politicians — how can they persuade themselves to believe in a preposterous proposition which is altogether against human nature? However noble the professions of an alien Government may be, can a man of common sense believe that a foreign Government can be carried on with only altruistic principles as its motive? If we want to be free, we must depend on ourselves and not on the goodwill of the Government.' And Swamiji was ready to undergo the greatest hardships, for the good of his country. At the end of the year 1897, Swamiji was living at Srijut Nagendra Nath Gupta's house at Lahore, who was then the editor of the *Lahore Tribune*. Only myself had the good fortune to live with Swamiji under the same roof. The other disciples lived in another house. There was a large settlement of Bengalees who lived at Meean Meerat, a short distance from Lahore town, in order to earn their livelihood by serving in various offices. Swamiji was one day invited there with his disciples and companions. Nagen Babu also accompanied us. On the way back from Meean Meerat to Lahore, Swamiji, Nagen Babu and myself came in a carriage. Swamiji was talking with Nagen Babu who, I believe, was his class-friend, on various topics, almost all of which has totally escaped my memory. One thing, however, I distinctly remember and it is this. In the course of the conversation, I heard Swamiji remark, 'If I am arrested by the Government, I know that India will be much benefited thereby.'

As I go on writing, a thousand reminiscences come rushing to my memory. The incidents narrated above seem very insignificant in themselves, but judging them at their true perspective they seem to me to throw a great flood of light on the real significance of Swamiji's teachings. A man is the servant of his nature and he is always prompted to act according to that. A man perhaps comes across a work of Swamiji which appeals to him very much, and he goes on acting according to its teachings as understood by him at that time. He goes on with his career. New experiences come, and he then perhaps reads a new meaning in the very teachings which he understood at the beginning otherwise. Reader, if you have patiently gone through all the seven big volumes of Swamiji's writings, have read his Life, and at the same time if you have also studied his revered Master, and after all that if you still feel puzzled as to the path you should travel, I will advise you to go to a corner of your room and pray earnestly for light and I am sure it will be vouchsafed unto you. Remember Sri Ramakrishna's words—'Make your thought and speech one — do earnestly whatever you feel sincerely in your heart. Even though you pursue a wrong path, if you are sincere, the Lord Himself will help you to find out the right direction. You want to visit Jagannath but you do not know the way. You have in your anxiety started towards the North when you should have gone to the South. But on your way you are asking every one who comes across you to show you the proper way. By this process you are sure to find at last some one who will show you the way — and you will be blessed at long last with the holy vision of Jagannath — the Lord of the Universe.'

(*Concluded*)

Upon us depends whether the name Hindu will stand for everything that is glorious, everything that is spiritual, or whether it will remain a name of opprobrium, one designating the downtrodden, the worthless, the heathen. If at present the word Hindu means anything bad, never mind; by our action let us be ready to show that this is the highest word that any language can invent. It has been one of the principles of my life not to be ashamed of my own ancestors. I am one of the proudest men ever born, but let me tell you frankly, it is not for myself, but on account of my ancestry.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE PRESENT INDIAN CONTEXT

ZAKIR HUSSAIN

[This article substantially forms the text of the speech delivered by Dr Zakir Hussain, Vice-President of India, at Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore Dt., on the occasion of the birth centenary celebration of Swami Vivekananda on July 3, 1963. His appraisal of the present Indian context, in its entirety, and what Swamiji would demand of us in the new circumstances is very significant. — *Ed.*]

I deem it a great privilege to have been asked to address this meeting held to celebrate the Birth Centenary of a great soul of India, Swami Vivekananda. You would have already come to know of the numberless manifestations of affection and esteem that are being daily reported in the Press from all over the country and even from outside India. How gratified we feel at that and how pardonably proud. But it seems to me that the matter does not end for us at being gratified and at feeling proud. We have to realize that the Swami was not just a child born 100 years ago today and who died 61 years ago. Yes, there was that life that he lived in this planet — and a noble life, indeed, of aspiration, expression, and achievement it was. But there is a life which, he, like all our great ones, is living and will continue to live — his life in us. Today when we meet to celebrate his birth, we should awaken in our conscience the question what will be the configuration of that life? When we pay a tribute to him, it is a tacit acceptance of what he represented. We might well consider what he stood for. I can only look within to catch a glimpse of what this great man has meant to me.

As I look back on my student days, I can clearly remember how the reading of some of the writings of the great Swami galvanised me. His metaphysics was, I confess, beyond me at the time. But I could not resist feeling what a true religious being feels like. For I saw in him a religious man who did not make a narrow speciality of religion, who did not exploit it to divide humanity into hostile groups each claiming the monopoly of truth and just passing it by. I felt attracted and through him I was introduced to the source from which he had drawn his inspiration — namely to know something of that God-intoxicated Saint, Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, — one of the very great ones in that great army of the spirit, marching down the corridors of time under the Indian sky, — the whole army that makes us sometimes forget our faults and vices and meannesses and by a secret process of identification makes us feel that we and our people are as sacred and as holy and as great as these, simply because we also live under the same sky. But gradually I knew more of how the young intellectual sceptical Narendra Nath Dutta approached the great saint and was picked out by him as 'a thousand-petalled lotus' and yet cut the saint and remained away from him for weeks together to appear later only to be caught in the net of his light and love. 'Why have you been staying away when I wanted so much to see you?' asked the Guru and just tapped him lightly on the chest with a finger. The young sceptic was aflame and felt swept off his feet crying in alarm, 'What are you doing to me? I have parents.' 'Then, then,' the Guru assured, 'that will do.' I realized how mysterious, indeed, are the ways in which personality kindles personality, the way the lamp of the soul is lighted by another burning light. I got more interested. I read of the hard ascetic wanderings of the young Swami — Vivekananda as he now was — his encounters with a suspicious police, his starvations and privations and I wondered if another mendicant monk was being fashioned to add to the thousands that roam our land. But Ramakrishna's touch was not of that order. It was a life-giving touch and put this ascetic young man to the tasks of service awaiting him. For I read him, Vivekananda, as saying :

> 'Remember, for the salvation of one's soul and for the good and happiness of the many, the Sanyasin is born in the world. To sacrifice his own life for others, to alleviate the misery of millions rending the air with their cries, to wipe away the tears from the eyes of the widow, to console the heart of the bereaved mother, to provide the ignorant and the depressed masses with the ways and means for the struggle for existence and make them stand on their own feet, to preach the teachings of the Shastras to one and all without distinction for their material and spiritual welfare, to rouse the sleeping lion of the Brahman in the hearts of all beings by the diffusion of the light of knowledge — the Sanyasin is born in the world.'

I saw it was a man of religion dedicated to the tasks of the service of his fellow men that was speaking. Some religious men seek their individual salvation contemplating, no more edifying an object than the tip of their nose and not care a hoot about what happens to the widow, and the bereaved mother and the poor and depressed. There are others who spend a life-time doing good without ever guessing the context in which that doing good can have a meaning. Things like this have happened even in the world of technology too. The steam engine, long after its invention, plied cumbrously on ill-made roads. The iron rails were in use for a long time in the mines of Europe for pushing trolleys along. The invention of the Railway, strange as it may sound, consisted just in putting the already existing steam engine on the already existing rails. It was the same in the case of Swami Vivekananda. His austerity, his religious experience, his enormous energy that experience generates represented the engine which was placed on the rails of work for the people, by the magic spell of Sri Ramakrishna's personality who secretly, as it were, passed on to the young disciple the keys of heaven with which could be opened also the doors of the treasures of the world. The service of mankind became the young disciple's burning passion and he could in a moment of ecstasy say, 'May I be born again and again and suffer a thousand miseries so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum total of all souls, and above all, my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races and species. May these be the special objects of my worship.' The wicked, the miserable, the poor of all races and species. All races and species. Did this man make no difference among men divided by colour, caste and religion? Did he make no distinction between man and other species? Yes, he insisted he did not. And how could he? He had come from Ramakrishna Paramahamsa of whom Romain Rolland has rightly said, 'Ramakrishna more fully than any other man, not only conceived but realized in himself the total unity of the River of God open to all rivers and streams.' He had come from Ramakrishna who had himself said, 'Do not *speak* of love for your brother. *Realize* it. Do not argue about doctrine or religion. There is only one. All rivers flow to the Ocean. Flow and let others flow too. The great stream carves for itself according to the slope of its journey — according to race, time and temperament — its own distinct bed. But it is all the same water. Go, flow on towards the Ocean.'

So this young monk, who was allowed by Nature only the brief sojourn of some forty years on this Earth, went round the earth, made known the greatness of India even in the days of her slavery, worked incessantly for awakening his people and giving them strength to march on the road to freedom. He organized that wonderful organization of service, the Ramakrishna Mission. He knew that for the great tasks he had in view, dedicated service was needed and it could be performed only by dedicated men. All really fruitful work is work with a sense of mission. The members of the Ramakrishna Mission can justly be proud of their achievement, though I feel that they would in the sacred preoccupations and disarming humility seldom have time for such a feeling. This work, as I see it, is an embodiment of living faith in God and its expression in the service of fellow-men. Theirs is a comprehensive task with spiritual purity at the centre. They represent religious aspiration at its best — as a motive force for a good individual and social life. Religion, to them, is not a dividing dogma but a message of love, not a dead weight but a life-giving and energizing force which gives the worker, the experience of being part of the universal spirit accomplishing its behest and gives to man's hands the strength, I may venture to say, something of the strength of the hands of God. During the 66 years of its existence it has become the leading centre of work in education, relief, civic sense, and social service. It is a worthy monument to the genius of the great man, Swami Vivekananda.

As we are celebrating the birth centenary of a man who has made a most significant contribution to the revival of spiritual life in our country with an ancient tradition of spirituality, I may be permitted to say something about the prospects and dangers of our spirituality as a people. Spirituality to me manifests itself in morality and so I would say a few words about these in the national and the individual context. Now in the national context, that is in the context of nation against nation, morality has been throughout history in great danger. It has, indeed, almost universally been subordinated to reasons of state. Statesman after statesman has been excused as a bold and realistic person seeking the salvation of his country by being just 'daring enough to prescribe poison'. It has been supremely difficult for those who had to steer the ship of the State to be true both to the State and to the universal moral law. Philosophers, priests, historians have exercised incredible ingenuity in finding good and bad justifications for doing this. Machiavelli and Kautilya are not lonely figures; they have had an army of forerunners and followers. Ancient or modern, Western or Eastern, the State in its long history has ever been a tragic field of tension between the advantageous and the moral, when double standards of morality have prevailed and God and the Devil have sat side by side on the throne. Except for extremely brief periods of separation this dual sovereignty has prevailed in the world of States. It can, therefore, not be easily dismissed in the future too. The main justification for this state of affairs, if one may at all use this word in this connection, is the indispensability of State life for the full growth of those who constitute it. If the existence of the State is endangered the continuance of all moral existence is in jeopardy — morality can exist only in political freedom. As a last resort, therefore, one persuades oneself to go against the moral law to retain some possibility — even if remote — of moral living. This justification of preserving a corporate moral personality has been very much to the fore since the advent of the nation-states, each one of which is supposed to represent a unique personality, 'a new avenue of expression for the human spirit,' in each one of which the spirit articulates itself in its peculiar form and reveals itself ever anew, for that is its 'mission from God'. From this hypothesis of the nation-state to the dictum of 'My country, right or wrong' is but one short step. The dreams of a universal political community, in this world of nation-states, could but be dream of world conquest, not of the One World as a world republic but of a servile world empire. Must that ever remain so? I venture to think that it need not. The changes which recent scientific discoveries and technological inventions have brought to the possibilities of unlimited destruction in war tend to change the context of the problem of power as between the States. States as power-organisations asserted their peculiar national personality and pushed their 'mission from God' through war. War, indeed, as Clausewitz put it, was politics with other means. Kautilya, Machiavelli and their numerous predecessors and successors looked upon diplomacy and war as a continuous process. It seems to me that it cannot remain so any longer. War is too destructive to be conceivable as a means to any aim except that of total mutual extinction. It can be contemplated as a possible means for the solution of problems on a big scale only at the level of insanity. Paradoxical though it may sound, the terrific efficiency of the war technique itself has rendered war on a big scale to a great extent unthinkable and one does not, I feel, hope in vain to see the day when it will be completely ruled out. But the nations will remain and their little corporate selfishnesses will, perhaps, survive and be operative, if not on the ground then on a meanly low scale of the hit and run sort in the shady enterprise of scoring a gain at the cost of moral principle, justifying as ever before the means with the end.

What should we aspire to educate our people to, who are also organised in a nation-state? For we cannot forget that in the new awakening which has made our nation-state possible the universal love of Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, the vigorous advocacy of a universal religion by Swami Vivekananda and the truth and non-violence of Mahatma Gandhi are not insignificant contributions. It is easy to brush the difficult aside for the sake of the easy and to argue that circumstances have changed. But have they? In the case of Gandhiji, to take the most recent example, the dichotomy of the nation-state and truth was not a hidden one. Large-visioned humanitarians were not wanting who accused him of national narrowness and brought out from him the honest retort 'If I do not know how to serve my countrymen, I shall never know how to serve humanity.' 'It is not nationalism that is evil,' said he, 'it is the narrowness, the selfishness, the exclusiveness which are the bane of modern nations, that is evil.' 'Indian nationalism,' he expressed the hope, 'has struck a new path. It wants to organize itself and find full self-expression for the benefit and service of humanity at large.' I am reminded of a simple and beautiful article he wrote in the *Young India* some time in 1921 entitled 'For God, King and Country'. Gandhiji narrated in the article a discussion he had with a party of Boy Scouts about their claim to serve God, King and Country. After making the rather easy point that the King at the time was an impersonal symbol which meant the British Empire and that no Indian in the circumstances of the day could remain loyal to the British Empire and to God at the same time, he came to the third loyalty — that to the country. And this leader of one of the most powerful national movements in modern history, with nationalistic enthusiasm at white-heat, had the cool discernment and simple truthfulness to say,

> 'Suppose our country becomes Godless in order to enrich itself, exploits other people, traffics in intoxicants, goes to war for the sake of extending its trade and resorts to fraud in order to sustain its power and prestige, how can we be consistently loyal to God and country? Must we not forsake the country for the sake of God? I suggest, therefore, that you should bind yourself to be faithful and loyal only to God and none else in the same sense and in the same breath.'

The country and its power and prestige were duly set in their right place! And he meant, as he always did, every word of what he said. It is my conviction and my faith that the trend of thought this discussion revealed, in spite of many setbacks, will prove to be the beginning of a new way of thinking and acting in the realm of international inter-statal relations and the world, sick with its moral maladies and mutually destructive life of suspicion and fear, will necessarily move in that direction. In a warless world of nation-states, co-existing in healthy mutual helpfulness, the State will not need to prefer power to principle and will strive to live in harmony with the moral law and we may not be forced to start with the presumption that the State is fated by the stern necessity of its very nature to a constant repetition of its sins.

But in spite of this conviction and this faith I would be untrue to myself if I did not point out to you that this implies a change in our national ethos, in our prevalent scale of values, in the spirit of our public life and the behaviour of our individual citizens which it is not easy in the present state of our national life to presuppose and take for granted. We should do well to confess to ourselves that as a people we are not in good moral trim. We tend to be slack and slovenly, selfish and self-satisfied, garrulous and greedy, covetous and corrupt, suspicious and self-righteous, lenient with ourselves and strict with others; we tend to subscribe to double standards, one for ourselves, the other for our brothers. This cannot do for a high level of integrity in the internal affairs of the State which is the essential basis of inter-statal relations. Then the secular nature of our State appears to make the situation in regard to moral standards doubly difficult, particularly because the basis of morality for our people over the ages has been almost exclusively religion. In our ancient society the king or the State was not the creator, but only the administrator of laws divinely ordained. But the functions of making laws and administering them are now both the State's. In a welfare State the scope of law-making is bound to expand to an unforeseeable extent. It is, therefore, essential that a vigilant insistence makes the Rule of Law an obvious reality. For the supremacy of the law is the best guarantee for the development of a moral climate in a secular society. The law creates a sense of objectivity and objectivity is, indeed, morality. The law applies to the Government as to the governed and the State in its sovereignty is no more free to go against the law than the private citizen. Yes, there has to be Rule of Law and it is to be universally known to be there if we are to grow as a people in good moral trim; people entitled to claim to be inheritors of the values which even in recent times have been woven into the fabric of our national life by men like Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Vivekananda, Tagore and Gandhi.

Another thing which in my view is essential for sustaining spiritually sound and morally virile national existence is the behaviour of the Government. There is a great deal said these days about our public services and our politicians and all of it is by no means very complimentary, all of it, is also not justified, for the picture is usually overdrawn in irresponsibly lurid colours. But that should not allow us the complacency of blunting the edge of our moral sensitivity. From tolerating wrong, to defending it and then to indulging in it are but short and quick steps. The situation demands anxious concern and vigilant and prompt correction. For the intensive and extensive growth of the administrative machinery — and this growth has been immense — has made its behaviour one of the most effective agencies of moulding the national character. Without intending to confirm the current alarming estimates of this evil, I do feel that too much care and effort cannot be devoted to toning up the morale and the morals of the administrative agency in order to ensure a sound ethical growth of Indian political life.

Then the role the political parties can and do play in this behalf is obvious. They directly educate the citizen politically and they actually and potentially work to wield power. I am afraid we cannot easily convince ourselves that all is well on this front. Power corrupts and the anxiety to get power corrupts no less. Lapses on the part of the politicians are intimately experienced by the people and are uninhibitedly and even maliciously advertised. This most deplorably undermines the people's own resistance to immoral urges of illegitimate gain and corruption. Condemned over long years to choose in the tainted sphere of a slave's loyalties, we are not, perhaps, stable on our feet, — in making the choices of free men. We tend, perhaps still to prefer the lower and narrower to the higher and wider loyalties. Personal gain, kith and kin, caste and creed.

tend to override the advantages of national life. We shall have to set our face steadfastly against this, if the spiritual stamina of the people is not to be irretrievably undermined.

The most important thing should be the provision of the possibility of a sound education for the people by providing a three-fold integrated discipline — the discipline of the intellect, the discipline of the will and the discipline of the emotions. If such an education can be provided — as it must be and therefore can be — the educated citizen does not only himself become a spiritually free personality but also the instrument of helping his State to become the realization of the ideal of the Just State; without such citizens the latter is but a hollow name. I have spoken so often and at such length to my people about this — borrowing my inspiration from Vivekananda, Tagore and Gandhi, besides many in other lands, that I hesitate to take more of your time than is needed in repeating a short formula which I have often enunciated and that is this: To provide such education we shall have to transform our people's schools from places of passive receptivity to those of meaningful satisfying activity; from seats of theoretical intellectual onesidedness to those of practical human many-sidedness; from places of amassing dead information to those of its fruitful use; from hearths of individual selfishness to homes of devotion to social ends. Without such schools catering for our entire youthful population we shall be laying the foundation of the moral and spiritual health of our people on sand. I know that such schools are not possible without good teachers but I feel sore at the prevailing hope that any worthwhile schools can ever be established with avowedly bad ones.

You may occasionally miss the relevance of what I have said on this occasion of the celebration of Swami Vivekananda's birth centenary. But I trust you know that the hall-mark of every genuine spiritual urge is sincerity. All the prophets and saints were unique personalities in many ways, but one quality they all had in common — utter sincerity. And while they made allowance for other failings and errors, there was one thing they condemned absolutely and unequivocally — hypocrisy. If you think I am right you will agree that, if not at all times, at least on solemn occasions such as this, when we come together to pay homage to a great soul, we should make a strict assessment of ourselves, of our truthfulness. We must make this assessment not only because it is something good and necessary in itself, but a something that will indicate to us how we stand with those whom we profess to honour. And if we subject ourselves to a little introspection, and remember the utter sincerity, the rigour, the directness, the great act of bringing conventional spirituality to the ideal of a live force engaged in reviving the spiritual and material life of our people, we will not hesitate to confess to ourselves that all is not well with our spirituality — however much and however beautifully we may sell it to our own self-complacency or to the critical but courteous scepticism of the foreigner. Vivekananda's memory need not make us all take to the Swami's robes. But if we are to make something worthwhile of our emergent nationhood, if you are to shape it into an instrument of a good individual and social life and if we aspire to make some real contribution to the life of the world, we shall each one of us disillusion himself of the transference of the virtue and goodness, of our virtuous and our great, to our unworthy shoulders without intense and honest effort. I sometimes wonder if we all make the India of to-day, the India Vivekananda yearned to see free and strong, realize the tremendous nature of the challenge with which as a free people we are faced. It is this challenge of our newly-won freedom which has all at once, as it were, made it imperative for us to deal with old and menacing challenges that had long waited to be met: the challenge of intellectual sensitiveness, the challenge of moral sensitiveness, the challenge of social injustice, the challenge of crippling customs, of narrow corporate selfishnesses, of the hatred of creed against creed and caste against caste, the challenge of ignorance, the challenge of preventible disease and avoidable death, the challenge of unspeakable poverty and the challenge of insensate personal aggrandisement. We cannot meet these just by words and more words. We have to learn from Swami Vivekananda the courage to put the engine of moral conviction on the rails of social service. We have to hammer ourselves into fit instruments for meeting the challenge by enabling our fellow-citizens to meet them. Work, work, work, silent and sincere dedicated work, solid and steady reconstruction of the whole material and cultural life of our people. Can you, will you, take up this great responsibility? You cannot take it up if you are impatient and in haste. The task is long, demands thoroughness and requires time. You cannot hope to help in it effectively if you can work only by fits and starts. It demands steady untiring effort. Overstrung nerves, followed by moods of blank paralysing despair have to be guarded against. You had better keep away in some comfortable corner if failures engender disappointment in you and disappointment despair. Failures there must be, perhaps frequent and many. Only they shall venture to work here who can turn every failure into good for renewed vigour. You cannot take upon yourself this great responsibility with a spirit of negation and distrust lurking within you, for these will render you intellectually too bankrupt and morally too sterile for the mighty effort. You cannot approach the great task with suspicion and irreverence, for something more robust and more energizing is required to give you the strength to address yourself to this immense project and to sustain you while you are at it. You cannot shoulder the responsibility if you proceed to work with dirty hands and impure hearts. It is sacred work. You may not put your hand to it with discord within you, discordant souls within cannot produce harmonies without.

I have unfolded a very long series of demands. You may feel I am asking you to become Swamis, to join the Ramakrishna Mission, for it sounds like the qualities which that distinguished Order which counts among its members some of the best specimens Indian humanity seems to possess. No, I don't ask you to join any Order. You have only to realize that you have to change yourself and that you have to learn to realize, spiritual realization and social service as the two inseparable sides of any fruitful religious attitude. That is the road to our true freedom — individual and national, that is the road to our self-realization, that is the road to our national greatness. May God give us the strength to take to that road, also the strength to speak less about it and do more to traverse it. May He give this strength to all of us, for it is not enough that a few of us should have it or should have had it at some near or distant date in the past. It can no longer do in the world as it is shaping to-day to have a group of saints and another of sinners, a class that gives its life-blood to create new values and a class that just enjoys them. We may no longer seek to lease the perfection of our national life on the multiplicity of individual defects. We have to aim at the perfection of the whole through the perfection of the part. We should be ready for the material just as much as for the ideal, for inner contemplative experience as well as for outward activity, for suffering as much as for enjoyment. We should learn to stand with our feet on firm ground and to converse with the stars on high.

I have after prayerful study of the works of Swami Vivekananda come to feel that this is what in the new circumstances of our country he will demand of us. I wish he had been with us to do so, for, in the fire of his burning conviction our hesitations would have melted away and the call would be difficult to resist. But even without him our responsibility is not the less and I hope and trust that we shall use this occasion of the celebration of his birth centenary to make some inner reserves in that direction. We can honour his memory in no better way and I know we are anxious to honour it, if we only knew how best to do it.

MANKIND NEEDS THE COMPREHENSIVE VIVEKANANDA

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

IV

After the Chinese invasion it is poignantly realized today that India needs to follow Vivekananda for her very survival.

> Dr. Radhakrishnan, the President of India, said in Calcutta on January 20th, that it was of supreme importance that the nation should remember what Swami Vivekananda stood for, taught us and understand what he wished us to do. It was not just a question of remembering him at the Centenary celebrations, but they must try to incorporate his teachings in their own beings and make themselves worthy citizens of the Country which gave us Vivekananda.[1]

In a speech on Swami Vivekananda,

> Prime Minister Pandit Nehru said... if he was to name a single individual as an ideal for children and young men to follow, he would name Swami Vivekananda. He was the very picture of vigour and strength... although Swami Vivekananda died before he was forty, he left a deep impression on the sands of time. This speaks for the intensity with which he lived.[2]

In a message dated December 29, 1962 to a Vivekananda Centenary function in Nairobi, Pandit Nehru said :

> Swami Vivekananda was a great religious teacher and one of those illustrious sons of India who laid stress on the need for acquiring knowledge to get at the bottom of truth and to dispel ignorance. His teachings are as vital and inspiring today as they were in the past. In the crisis we are passing through today owing to the invasion of India by China, we can draw much inspiration from Swami Vivekananda.

These messages of the President and Prime Minister of India reflect the nation's awareness of the supreme need of following Swami Vivekananda.

It may only be added for clarification that Swami Vivekananda is not the ideal for any particular age-group of people. He is the ideal for all Indians for all time to follow, for he gave an eternal message, to be followed through changing times. No matter what religion one belongs to, every Indian, nay, every human being, by following his teachings can find ways and means for the fulfilment of his life in ways that would be in a measure helpful to others also. That is the beauty, efficacy and urgency of Vivekananda-idealism.

Now it is a truism to say that to be able to follow Vivekananda we must understand his teachings. And we have explained why we require to understand and follow comprehensive Vivekananda and not a segmentary or fragmented Vivekananda. For this we shall have to study Vivekananda anew with a totality bias. Studying Vivekananda does not only mean reading the *Complete Works*. It means trying to understand Vivekananda in the context of his background, life, message, thought, love and foreground too. It is hoped that if we remember certain key-ideas about Vivekananda at the back of our minds, understanding of the comprehensive Vivekananda may to a certain extent be facilitated.

The first thing to be remembered about Vivekananda is that he is a Brahma-jnani, a knower of Brahman, who by an unusual dispensation of God, was a thoroughly modern man too. His spiritual leadership came to him by way of commission from the Most High, *after* he had attained illumination. He delved into the consideration of fundamental problems of humanity after he had experientially known reality in which alone all our conflicts are resolved. In Vivekananda's teachings and leadership there is not only no conflict between the eternal and the temporal, past and present, reason and faith, science and religion, East and West, empirical and spiritual, nationalism and universalism, but their necessary correlations become defined and established as well.

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[1] Reported in the *Hindu* (overseas weekly edition) dated 1-2-63.

[2] Reported in the *Overseas Hindusthan Times*, Feb. 7, 1963.

Second : According to Swami Vivekananda spirituality alone is the life-blood of India. 'If it flows clear, if it flows strong, pure and vigorous, every thing is right ; political, social, any other material defect, even the poverty of the land, will be all cured if that blood is pure.' (III. 288) Therefore Indian nationhood and Vivekananda's concept of religion are inseparable. He said, 'National union of India must be gathering up of its scattered spiritual forces. A nation in India must be a union of those whose hearts beat to the same spiritual tune.' (III. 371). This statement should not be interpreted in a way as though Vivekananda wanted some sort of a 'Hindu raj'. It should be understood in reference to his basic concept of religion. He says : 'There never was my religion or yours, my national religion or your national religion ; there never existed many religions, there is the only one. One Infinite Religion existed all through eternity and will ever exist, and this Religion is expressing itself in various countries in various ways.'

What was that spiritual tune to which the hearts in India were to be united ? That is the tune of unity of existence. Vivekananda put it categorically, 'None can regenerate this land of ours without the practical application and effective operation of this ideal of oneness of things.' (III. 188) Because Vivekananda based his nationalism on the highest truth of oneness of existence, it has no conflict with his universalism. Patriotism was only a segment of his universalism.

Third : Vivekananda's ideal is not harmony with nature but conquest of nature both inner and outer for the realization of the sovereignty of Atman. Study and practice of Yoga and the sciences have therefore to go hand in hand. India will have to learn the physical sciences from the Western Countries but must stay capable of teaching Vedanta and Yoga to the Western people. This mutuality of respectful relationship of teacher and pupil between East-West and West-East will have to be maintained for the good of mankind.

Fourth : Education, the all-powerful lever of human progress, has to be co-related with human destiny itself. Therefore according to Vivekananda education is the manifestation of the perfection already in man. And of education the core is religion, which he defines as manifestation of divinity already in man.

Fifth : Vivekananda touched human life at many points in a redeeming manner. But undoubtedly his greatest service has been in the sphere of religion, which again covers life in its entirety. He clarified the concept of religion by teaching man to see the ocean of one basic religion behind the waves of many religions. He simplifies religion by boldly throwing out junks, accretions and superstitions but carefully retaining every grain of truth. He revolutionized religion by opening the paths of salvation to all in redefining the yogas in a manner understandable to the common man. He humanized religion by making it respectfully responsive to human needs at lower keys without compromising its transcendental character. He strengthened religion by boldly inviting scientific scrutiny of all religious phenomena and by making religion look science in the face, and the future frontally. He unified religions by explaining the need of religious harmony and also by baring its rationale. He himself became the object lesson as to how religion could become a triumphing and liberating power.

Sixth : Vivekananda is not only a nation-builder in India and a world-mover, he is primarily the Acharya of the age of science and technology. He has shown that religion has no need to be on the defensive, for it has irresistible challenges to offer.

Seventh : One of the most important teachings of Swami Vivekananda is that true religion should be carefully separated from the changing and changeable social customs, modes and mores. 'True religion is entirely transcendental. Every being that is in the universe has the potentiality of transcending the senses; even the little worm will one day transcend the senses and reach God.' (I. 416) Manifestation of the divine potentiality is religion according to Vivekananda. This manifestation is possible only through 'renunciation and service' which are fundamental to all practice of yoga in the context of modern times. India's life blood being spirituality, 'renunciation and service' are the eternal national ideals of India. In its practical aspect Vivekananda's concept of religion is picturesquely summed up in the seal he gave to the Ramakrishna Order. This seal is in fact an object lesson as to what should be the inner spiritual life of man in the present and the future. It has to be moulded through the practice of integral yoga, for the harmonious and maximum development of man's spiritual potential. The mighty times that confront man leave him with no other choice but to manifest his best. Vivekananda's concept of integral yoga envisages the emergence in history of a time when mighty men will be common men in the world.

Eighth: Swami Vivekananda's sociological thinking is squarely based on his Brahmavada. If he said 'I am a socialist,' it has to be understood in reference to his definition of transcendental religion. Vivekananda does not stand for this or that social system. He stands for man. Whatever helps man's, everyman's, physical, mental and spiritual upliftment and facilitates his manifestation of divinity, only that is the ideal social system according to Vivekananda. That is the highest society where highest truth becomes workable. Society will have to pay homage to truth. Truth will not pay homage to society. There is nothing immutable about social customs or systems. A great mistake is done when it is thought that when a social system is changed, religion is being tampered with. No one can ever tamper with essential religion, which is transcendental truth. The ideal of society would be the production of highest men, men of illumination. But it should never be forgotten that in everyone there is this potential. The lowliest in a society must be the focal point of society's concern. The highest in a society, the pinnacle of the pyramid, must melt in prostration, in service to the lowliest at the base of the pyramid. Then there will arise a new kind of humanity. That is Swami Vivekananda's vision of *Daridranarayana-seva* or service to the lowly, looking upon them as manifestation of the Divine. This is his bringing the Vedanta of forests and caves to human society.

Ninth: The manifestation of divinity has to take place in an empirical and material contingency. There is no way of escaping this fact. Whenever attempts have been made to escape this fact, Vedanta tended to become purer than purity itself! *Leela* is God undoubtedly, *Nitya* is God of course. This is why Sri Ramakrishna worshipped the Divine Mother. Sanctification of the empirical, deification of the material, is truly speaking the 'aggressive Hinduism'. In Vivekananda's scheme of understanding the phenomenon, there is nothing secular. Yet in the ultimate analysis phenomenon is not real in the sense Brahman is real. This great truth Swami Vivekananda inculcated in India by his acceptance of subdued materialism and balanced monasticism, in his plan for the regeneration of India. This world is for getting out of it, for every one, some day. Therefore the gate must always be kept open. That open gate is monasticism. But where would the gate stand? Therefore, 'subdued materialism'. No pushing anyone forcibly through the gate. That mistake was made in Buddhistic India. Swami Vivekananda believed in giving every dog its day, to bring about an inner revolution. Then the inevitable reversal would take place and God in men would be awakened. Then men would rush through the gate. That is renunciation. That is monasticism. If India seeks to follow Vivekananda, one of the crucial tasks for India is to see that materialism really stays earnest but subdued, and monasticism remains vigorous but balanced. In this way alone both the *pravṛtti mārga* and *nivṛtti mārga*, the paths of outwardization and inwardization, which constitute the Indian way of life, will remain open. Citizens of India should be so brought up by its political and social systems that they would feel it beneath their dignity to beg. But then they should always be ready to give alms. Otherwise the India of the future will not see a Buddha, or a Śankara, or a Vivekananda walking on the dusty roads of her land. It is good India is having her national laboratories and great institutions dedicated to the cultivation of science. Worshipping at those temples is welcome, for, if the study of science is the pursuance of truth, it is worship indeed, Truth being God. But then, if we want lively monasticism in India, our homes also should be temples. Every mother and father should deem it an honour if a son or a daughter becomes a monk or a nun. There should be a climate, provision and facilities for retiring people to go to *Vānaprastha*. Dying in harness is good, but dying in holiness is infinitely better. As national parks are maintained for recreational purposes, or for the preservation of flora or fauna, so should be preserved places which could be utilized for retreats by spiritual aspirants. Places of pilgrimage should be considered as important national institutions as national laboratories even in these 'modern' times. While monks and nuns should not claim any privileges — having renounced the world, they have no right to that — they should not be looked upon as parasites. There will always be good monks and bad monks, as good householders and bad householders. The only way of having more good monks than bad monks is to have more good householders than bad householders and to emphasize in the consciousness of the nation the fact that this world is for getting out of it. As Sri Ramakrishna says, 'To realize God is the one goal of life.'

Tenth: The great fact to be remembered, however, in trying to apprehend comprehensive Vivekananda is that it is futile to try to understand Vivekananda without reference to Sri Ramakrishna. As Girish Chandra Ghosh, one of the householder disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, said, 'One who thinks Vivekananda is separate from Sri Ramakrishna, is simply ignorant.'

In reply to the address of welcome at Calcutta on his return from America, Swami Vivekananda said :

> 'Brothers, you have touched another chord in my heart, *the deepest of all*, and that is the mention of my teacher, my master, my hero, my idea, my God in life — Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa. If there has been anything achieved by me, by thought or words, or deeds, if from my lips has ever fallen one word that has helped any one in this world, I lay no claim to it, it was his. But if there have been curses falling from my lips, if there has been hatred coming out of me, it is all mine, and not his. All that has been weak has been mine, and all that has been life-giving, strengthening, pure and holy has been his inspiration, his words, and *he himself*.... at (his) feet I have learnt everything.' (III. 312)

This being Vivekananda's own declaration, how is it possible to understand comprehensive Vivekananda without reference to Sri Ramakrishna? It will be like trying to build a skyscraper without a foundation. It will be like trying to understand St. Paul without reference to Christ. The key to understand St. Paul is in these few words : '...not I but Christ in me.' The key to understand Vivekananda is not in Vivekananda but in Sri Ramakrishna. There is not an iota of exaggeration in his statement that whatever services he might have rendered to humanity by his thought, word or deed, 'has been his (Sri Ramakrishna's) inspiration, his word, nay *he himself*.'

Consideration of how it was 'he himself', will take us deep into the mystic element of Vivekananda's amazing life. For our present purpose it will suffice to say that the Swami was not only the disciple as is ordinarily known, but the very self of Sri Ramakrishna, not in the Advaitic sense, in which Atman is but One, but in the sense of the same incarnation functioning through two bodies. This is what Sri Ramakrishna himself said. And his precise and clear words in this regard are on record.[3]

How then would we venture to try to understand comprehensive Vivekananda without reference to Sri Ramakrishna?

Apart from this, there is another less known categorical declaration of Vivekananda which makes it imperative for India to study Vivekananda in reference to Sri Ramakrishna. If today Indian leaders are thinking anew of the supreme importance of putting into practice Vivekananda's teachings, it is because they are convinced that for India's all-round welfare and upliftment, his teachings are indispensable. But on this point Vivekananda himself said:

> 'Once more He has come to help His children, once more the opportunity is given to fallen India to rise. India can only rise by sitting at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna.'

This indeed is the focal point and summation of Vivekananda's ministrations to India and the world. Until we reach the feet of Sri Ramakrishna following the trails of Vivekananda's teachings, we cannot understand him in a comprehensive way.

But this statement of Vivekananda should be understood in as profound a sense as he pronounced it. According to him:

> 'The Life of Sri Ramakrishna was an extraordinary searchlight under whose illumination one is able really to understand the whole scope of Hindu religion. He was the object lesson of all the theoretical knowledge given in the Shastras. He showed by his life what the Rishis and Avatars really wanted to teach. The books were theories, he was realization. This man in fifty years lived the five-thousand years of national spiritual life and so raised himself to be an object-lesson for future generations. The Vedas can only be explained and Shastras reconciled by his theory of *avastha* or stages. That we must not only tolerate others but positively embrace them, and that Truth is the basis of all religions.'

Mystic coalescence of the person of Christ and Sri Ramakrishna, and the latter's realization of the truth of Islam, provides the necessary symbolic spiritual ground for all non-Hindus to consider him as their own too. Sri Ramakrishna is an embodiment of eternal spiritual principles which flowed out into the wide world as the dynamic being and saving words of Vivekananda.

Did not Vivekananda himself declare that what he taught was really 'he (Sri Ramakrishna) himself'? And Vivekananda was what he taught, by being or by speaking.

Comprehensive Vivekananda is Sri Ramakrishna himself, or if you like, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda.

(*Concluded*)

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[3] Vide *Sri Ramakrishna, the Great Master,* Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras, India, 1st Edition, p. 814.

Do not care for doctrines, do not care for dogmas, or sects, or churches or temples; they count for little compared with the essence of existence in each man, which is spirituality, and more this is developed in a man, the more powerful is he for good. . . . Only those who have attained to spirituality can communicate it to others. . . . My Master's message to mankind is, 'Be spiritual and realize Truth for yourself.'

* * *

The growth of man can only be gauged by his power of living in the higher atmosphere where the senses are left behind, the amount of the pure thought-oxygen his lungs can breathe in, and the amount of time he can spend on that height. . . . Man must raise himself to that higher plane, if he wants to enjoy its beauties, to bathe in its light, to feel his life pulsating in unison with the Cause-life of the Universe.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE SCIENTIFIC IDEAL

(Continued from the previous issue)

J. M. G. FELL

Let us briefly outline the training of the mind which raja-yoga proposes. Swami Vivekananda's lectures and writings are of course full of explanations of this method of training — of unique value since he was himself not only a past master of raja-yoga but also a writer and speaker of great power and clarity. To begin with, the practice of raja-yoga cannot be successful without total dedication of one's life to it. The mind is a unity; it cannot be concentrated and freed from the domination of desires at one period of the day, and then allowed to be distracted by desires at other periods. There can be no professionalism in this pursuit. Therefore the first steps in yogic training (*yama* and *niyama*) are adherence to a strict moral code involving non-dependence, purity, continence, harmlessness, and non-covetousness. This may be called the exterior preparation. The second group of steps (*āsana, prāṇāyāma,* and *pratyahāra*) form the interior preparation. Here we practise freeing the mind from domination by the body. Only the last three steps—*dhāraṇa, dhyāna,* and *samādhi*—are properly concerned with meditation and inner perception.

When a person has mastered the last three steps of yoga he is able to perceive and analyze the finest and most subtle motions of the mind. In particular, the almost instantaneous mental processes by which each individual constructs the world of his perception become an open book to him. For we must remember that the world as we perceive it is not imposed upon us in all respects from outside. A large part of it is a construct of our own minds, a private response to stimuli from outside. This is hardly surprising when we realize how many different steps there are, how many different organs and centres in the brain participate, in conveying each sensory message to the perceiving self.

> 'Take this book. As a book it does not exist outside; what exists outside is unknown and unknowable. The unknowable furnishes the suggestion that gives a blow to the mind, and the mind gives out the reaction in the form of a book, in the same manner as when a stone is thrown into the water, the water is thrown against it in the form of waves. The real universe is the occasion of the reaction of the mind. A book form, or an elephant form, or a man form, is not outside. All that we know is our mental reaction from the outer suggestion.' (Commentary on Chap. I, v. 2, 'Raja-Yoga,' Works, Vol. I, p. 201).

It was fashionable in the nineteenth century to make a distinction between so-called 'primary' and 'secondary' qualities. This distinction was based on Newtonian physics, according to which the fundamental qualities of the material world were geometrical and mechanical. Thus shape, size, and velocity, for example, were real, 'primary' qualities of things; they existed independently of man's perception. Taste, smell, and colour, however, were not independent of man; they were 'secondary', derivative qualities. Colour, for example, did not exist as such in the outside world; the process underlying colour was electromagnetic vibration, which had nothing to do with the subjective sensation of colour. This distinction between primary and secondary qualities, however, is artificial. Why should perceptions of size, shape, duration, and so forth, be granted an absoluteness which is denied to colour and smell? It is more reasonable to question *every* category by which we interpret the world. The basic categories of time, space and causation are just as much open to the suspicion of arbitrariness as the more derivative categories of smell, colour, and so forth. How is this arbitrariness to be genuinely investigated? This can only be done by one who has the ability to analyze introspectively each sense-perception into its components — to decompose that which to the ordinary man is a single instantaneous whole into a series of subtle, extremely rapid, but still consecutive processes. There is the incoming stimulus, its reception by the mind, the reaction of the mind, the placing of its stamp by the ego upon the final product. All these steps must be clearly sifted before it will be possible to decide at what stage our interpretations are arbitrary. And the only person who has this sifting power is he who has mastered the last three stages of yoga.

> 'We hear a sound. First there is the external vibration; second, the nerve motion that carries it to the mind; third, the reaction from the mind, along with which flashes the knowledge of the object which was the external cause of these different changes from the ethereal vibrations to the mental reactions. . . . Now these, though distinct processes, have become mixed up in such a fashion as to become quite indistinct. In fact, we cannot now perceive any of these, we only perceive their combined effect, what we call the external object. Every act of perception includes these three, and there is no reason why we should not be able to distinguish them.' ('Dhyana and Samadhi,' Works, Vol. I, p. 187. See also Swami Vivekananda's commentary on Patanjali's Yoga-Sutras, Chap. I, vs. 42 and 43, Works, Vol. I, pp. 229, 230).

Some may raise the objection that, while each man's construction of the world is undoubtedly his own, it is a mistake to call this construction 'arbitrary'. We cannot construct our world in any way we like. The very fact that we all agree on the features of the world around us, that we can live together and work together, shows that we are compelled to see the world in the way in which we see it, and not in some arbitrary fashion. But this argument is not convincing; in fact, it demonstrates something rather different from what it is intended to demonstrate. It shows that, if there were a being whose interpretation of the world differed profoundly and radically from ours, he could not be a *human* being living and working among us. He would — to use somewhat 'occult' terminology — be on a different plane of existence. Swami Vivekananda has explained this in the following passage:

> 'That which existed eternally, independent of the senses and the intellect, was the Lord Himself. Upon Him the senses are painting chairs and tables and rooms and houses and worlds and moons and suns and stars and everything else. How is it then that we all see this same chair, that we are all alike painting these various things on the Lord, on this Existence, Knowledge, and Bliss? It need not be that all paint the same way, but those who paint the same way are on the same plane of existence and therefore they see one another's paintings as well as one another. There may be millions of beings between you and me who do not paint the Lord in the same way, and them and their paintings we do not see.' ('Reason and Religion,' Works, Vol. I, p. 374).

Thus a hard and intensive training in the yoga of meditation and introspection is, we suggest, the only way by which the limitations inherent in the present methodology of science can be broken through. For in this way we are striking at the heart of the fundamental unanalyzed assumption of science — the reality of the external world. As we said before, however, whether even this method will lead to a substantial advance in truth cannot be guaranteed beforehand. Perhaps the yogis are subtly self-deluded. Certainly the perceptions of the yogi cannot be proved valid to non-yogis like ourselves. Even the exhibition of undeniable psychic powers and 'miracles' would be no more a proof of the yogi's claims to scientific knowledge than the virtuosity of a great pianist would guarantee his insight into the physiology of the finger muscles. Like Columbus striking westward across the Atlantic, we have to begin with some faith and some unproved working hypothesis. And, after all, there is no alternative left to us if we wish to be scientific and yet are not content to occupy ourselves solely with the questions to which contemporary science can provide answers.

3

We have seen how science itself suggests the practice of raja-yoga in order to overcome the limitations inherent in science. Now raja-yoga had been practised in India for several thousand years before the advent of Swami Vivekananda. Presumably the accumulated experiences of the many yogis of the past must have built up a vast fund of knowledge. Where is that knowledge stored? The repository of the psychological insights gained through the practice of raja-yoga is the Sankhya philosophy, reputedly founded by the ancient sage Kapila (for whom Swamiji had the deepest admiration; see *Works*, Vol. II, p. 443). The word 'philosophy' here is perhaps a misnomer. For the sages who originated it, this was not a speculative system but a systematized record of direct experience of superconscious truth. With later, doubtless less enlightened, philosophers it tended to become a purely intellectual, speculative discipline. Without having enjoyed the inner experiences on which it was based, one cannot expect even to understand the Sankhya system, much less to verify it. Which of us for example at the present day can understand the real meaning of the five subtle and gross elements which figure in the Sankhya cosmology?

Nevertheless, precisely because each of them is based not on mere speculation but on actual experience, we may expect that physical science and Sankhya, the external and internal approaches to the study of nature, will eventually converge to the same truths. Swami Vivekananda frequently expressed this hope:

> 'They (the Sankhya philosophers) analyzed the mental part of this universe and came to certain conclusions, which we, analyzing the physical part, must come to, for they both must lead to the same centre.' ('A Study of the Sankhya Philosophy,' *Works*, Vol. II, p. 441).

We have not the space here, nor are we qualified, to give an adequate summary of the Sankhya system. However, we should like to mention certain features of the Sankhya doctrine of which Swami Vivekananda found intimations in the discoveries of the sciences of his day.

First, to the Sankhya philosophers, mind, like physical matter, is a material and unconscious entity. Only the Puruṣa, the perceiving Self behind the mind and ego, is conscious Spirit. Unlike idealists of the West who create difficulties by insisting that the mind, though related to the body, is immaterial, the Sankhya places the dividing line between spirit and matter on the far side of mind, intellect, and ego. In this they are in sympathy with the 'materialistic monism' of contemporary science.

> 'It is startling to find that the philosophers and metaphysicians of India stated ages ago that mind is material. What are our present materialists trying to do but to show that mind is as much a product of Nature as the body? And so is thought, and, we shall find by and by, intelligence also; all issue from that Nature which is called *avyaktam*, the undifferentiated.' ('Cosmology,' *Works*, Vol. II, p. 431).

Secondly, though both mind and body are material, there is a great difference in the degree of fineness, or subtlety, of the matter of which they are composed. The Sankhya distinguishes between subtle matter and gross matter. The former is what composes the mind, the latter is what we perceive through the senses. Thus we may speak of the subtle world (the world of mind) and the gross world (the world perceived by the senses). The latter is the world studied by the physical sciences, the former is the world revealed to the yogi in meditation. Nevertheless, these two worlds, the subtle and the gross, are not really separate. Each thing that exists is a member of both worlds. This is obvious in the case of human beings, who clearly possess both a mind and a body. It is less obvious, but true, for animals, plants, and even inanimate objects. It is often said that certain objects and places have particular mental 'atmospheres' attached to them. This, if true, shows that even inanimate things can participate in subtle qualities. Whether we perceive the subtle or the gross aspects of a given object depends on the state of mind with which we approach it. The situation may be likened to a radio, which can be tuned at will to receive any one of a number of alternative frequencies. Similarly we may, by adjusting our state of consciousness, attune ourselves to any one of the several alternative visions of the world. We have already quoted Swamiji's explanation of the possibility of different visions of the same underlying reality (Vol. I, p. 374).

Thirdly, the subtle world, like the gross world, is a unity. Swami Vivekananda was never tired of emphasizing this unity, and of pointing out how scientific research was demonstrating it on the physical plane.

> 'To my mind, if modern science is proving anything again and again, it is this, that we are one—mentally, spiritually, and physically. It is wrong to say that we are even physically different. Supposing we are materialists, for argument's sake, we shall have to come to this, that the whole universe is simply an ocean of matter, of which you and I are like little whirlpools. ....The matter that is in my body may have been in yours a few years ago, or in the sun, or may have been the matter in a plant, and so on, in a continuous state of flux. What is meant by your body and my body? It is the oneness of the body. So with thought. It is an ocean of thought, one infinite mass, in which your mind and my mind are like whirlpools. Are you not seeing the effect now, how my thoughts are entering into yours and yours into mine? The whole of our lives is one; we are one even in thought. Coming to a still further generalization, the essence of matter and thought is their potentiality of spirit; this is the unity from which all have come, and that must essentially be one.' ('Reason and Religion,' *Works*, Vol. I, p. 372).

It is this oneness of the world of mind which assures us that insights gained from introspection and meditation are not merely private to ourselves but universal. Telepathy and psychic powers, if indeed they exist, will also be demonstrations of this oneness. It is a common conception in the present age that the mind of the individual is locked up within the brainbox, and can have no contact with the external world except through sensory messages conveyed along the nerves into the brain. If this were so, then certainly, by sitting still with eyes and ears closed, one could never hope to gain knowledge concerning anything outside one's own body. But why should this be so? Even physically, we have learned, energy can be conveyed electromagnetically through 'empty space' without the agency of matter. Why should not a similar contact be possible between mind and mind, without the instrumentality of nerves and senses? Speaking before the discovery of radio, Swami Vivekananda asserted that by the awakening of the Kundalini was meant precisely this — the power of mind to act and function independently of the material nervous system.

> 'All the sensations and motions of the body are being sent into the brain, and sent out of it, through these wires of nerve fibres. ....But why should not the mind send news without any wires, or react without any wire? We see this is done in nature. The yogi says, if you can do that you have got rid of the bondage of matter. How to do it? ....If we can send the mental current through that hollow canal (the Sushumna) without any nerve fibres to act as wires, the yogi says the problem is solved, and he also says it can be done. ....Then alone will all knowledge come to us—no more bondage of body.' ('The Psychic Prana,' *Works*, Vol. I, p. 163).

Thus, introspection as practised by a master yogi means 'looking within', not in the sense of looking within the brainbox, but in the sense of looking at the subtle world rather than at the gross world. As such, it is no more confined to the private world of one individual than are the instruments and observations of the physical scientist.

Fourthly, the subtle is related to the gross as cause to effect. The subtle world is the cause, source, and motive power of the gross world. As Swami Vivekananda says:

> 'According to the raja-yoga, the external world is but the gross form of the internal, or subtle. The finer is always the cause, the grosser the effect. So the external world is the effect, the internal the cause. In the same way external forces are simply the grosser parts, of which the internal forces are the finer. The man who has discovered and learned how to manipulate the internal forces

will get the whole of nature under his control.' (Introduction to 'Raja-Yoga', *Works,* Vol. I, p. 132).

As Swami Vivekananda seems to suggest in this passage, the relation of cause and effect between subtle and gross can be understood in two ways. First, the gross world is in its entirety the outcome of the subtle. We have already suggested, in the second section of this article, that our ordinary perception of the physical world is an arbitrary superimposition on what is given from outside. It is the result of certain combinations of subtle mental patterns to which we are firmly habituated. Thus, Sankhya analyzes the genesis of the gross world in terms of the 'scrambling' of the various subtle elements; and suggests that, if we are to become free of this arbitrary mental pattern which we call the gross world, we must learn to 'unscramble' the subtle elements and view them as separate, as they really are.

Not only is the subtle world the origin of the gross world in toto, but it is also true that individual phenomena within the gross world originate from subtle forces and return to subtle forces. Here we encounter the Sankhya doctrine of evolution. If a new manifestation arises in the material world with no visible antecedent — whether it be the beginnings of life on this planet, the birth of a 'new' individual, the emergence of mind or 'soul', or anything else — we are not to trace it to the direct intervention of a Creator God outside nature, or on the other hand to suppose that it had no cause at all. Nothing comes from nothing. There is no creation or annihilation, but only transformation of form. What was present in invisible subtle form to begin with becomes visible for a while — this is birth — and then returns to its primal subtle form — this is destruction or death. If a Christ or a Buddha emerges as the climax of the evolutionary process, we may conclude that Buddhahood or Christhood was potential even in the lowest form of life — even in the primaeval gaseous nebula.

'The effect is never different from the cause. It is only that this effect is a reproduction of the cause in a grosser form. . . . Nothing can be created out of nothing. Everything exists through eternity and will exist through eternity. Only the movement is in succeeding waves and hollows, going back to fine forms, and coming out into gross manifestations. . . . Take this whole evolutionary series, from the protoplasm at one end to the perfect man at the other, and this whole series is one life. In the end we find the perfect man, so in the beginning it must have been the same. Therefore the protoplasm was the involution of the highest intelligence. You may not see it, but that involved intelligence is what is uncoiling itself until it becomes manifested in the most perfect man.' ('The Cosmos', *Works,* Vol. II, pp. 206, 208, 209).

'The explanation of a thing must come from inside and not from outside. . . . Many occurrences which are really natural phenomena are attributed by people to unnatural beings. . . . There had been the belief that, when a man threw up a stone and it fell, some demon dragged it down. . . . [This] was an explanation which was not in the thing itself, it was an explanation from outside. But the second explanation of gravitation is something in the nature of the stone. The explanation is coming from inside. . . . What is meant by science is that the explanations of things are in their own nature, and that no external beings or existences are required to explain what is going on in the universe. . . . And this is one of the features of science which I mean to apply to religion. . . . There is an ancient theory of a personal deity entirely separate from the universe . . ., an extra-cosmic deity, who has created the universe out of his will, and is conceived by religion to be its ruler. . . . [This] was an explanation from outside and not inside. . . . And just as it was found insufficient to explain the phenomenon of the falling stone, so this was found insufficient to explain religion. And religions are falling to pieces, because they cannot give a better explanation than that.

'Another idea connected with this, the manifestation of the same principle, that the explanation of everything comes from inside it, is the modern law of evolution. The whole meaning of evolution is simply that the nature of a thing is reproduced, that the effect is nothing but the cause in another form.' ('Reason and Religion,' *Works,* Vol. I, pp. 369, 370, 371).

We need hardly emphasize the firm support which the modern biological sciences lend to this ancient Sankhya theory of evolution. We have already described how, in the light of the evolutionary theory, a great deal of narrow theology has been discredited. It is of course true that the mechanism and motive power behind the evolution of species is not yet fully understood by science. Nevertheless, the developments in modern physics and cosmology teach us more and more emphatically that the origins of the motions of visible, localized matter lie in what is invisible and unlocalized — that is, in so-called 'fields of force'. 'Empty space' turns out to be far from empty. There are few things more remarkable than to feel the force of two electrically charged bodies attracting one another across a vacuum. How does each body 'know' that the other is there, when there is only 'empty space' between them? Thus physics is discovering that the subtle is the cause of the gross; and we may assume that biology will not lag far behind.

We have now reached the end of our theme. We have shown how the way was prepared for Swami Vivekananda's message in the West, at least in part, by the triumph of science over the too narrow theology of the Christian churches; how the ideal of science, according to Swamiji's teaching, points the way to the ideal of religion (at least in its aspect of raja-yoga); and how science, even in its present rudimentary state, foreshadows many of the teachings of the Sankhya, the philosophy of raja-yoga. If the common practice of science in the present day appears spiritually barren, it is because practising scientists, entangled by professionalism and economic and political motives, have forgotten the ideal which should inspire them, and which would lead them ultimately to raja-yoga.

However, even in the practice of raja-yoga there is danger of losing sight of the ideal goal. All spiritual teachers, from Patanjali to Swami Vivekananda, have stressed how dangerous it is to become obsessed with the fascinating psychic phenomena which come within the grasp of the trained yogi. Science — whether it be physical science or raja-yoga — observes phenomena, reasons about them, generalizes from them; but the phenomena in themselves are not the goal. What is the ultimate goal? The goal, as we have said before, is to find some absolute existence which is not dependent upon arbitrary conditions or assumptions, and which somehow underlies all the multifarious phenomena of nature, whether physical or mental. This single absolute being must be a unity; and when we have found that absolute, that unity, our search ceases. What is that absolute existence? Of course it cannot be described in our language which is adapted to physical experience, for it is not a physical, or even a mental being. It is the Self — the true Self within every living and every non-living thing. Only by standing on the foundation of that Absolute will we be able to view all phenomena with clarity and true vision. But when the Self is known, who will be interested in particular phenomena? To the sage who knows the Self, the whole physical and mental universe seems like a very small thing. It is like the case of a person who fully understands the general laws of arithmetic; he will not feel elated on being told that 114×59=6,726, for he knows that he can perform any number of such calculations whenever he wishes.

This sublime concept of the ultimate Knowledge is beautifully set forth by Swami Vivekananda in our concluding quotation:

> 'Science is nothing but the finding of unity. As soon as science would reach perfect unity, it would stop from further progress, because it would reach the goal. ....Physics would stop when it would be able to fulfil its services in discovering one energy of which all the others are but manifestations, and the science of religion become perfect when it would discover Him who is the one life in a universe of death, Him who is the constant basis of an ever-changing world, One who is the only Soul of which all souls are but delusive manifestations. Thus is it, through multiplicity and duality, that the ultimate unity is reached. Religion can go no farther. This is the goal of all science.' (Paper on Hinduism at the Parliament of Religions, *Works*, Vol. I, pp. 12, 13).

(*Concluded*)

FURTHER LIGHT ON SWAMI VIVEKANANDA'S INSPIRED TALKS

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

SWAMI ATMAGHANANANDA

II

Tuesday, July 2, 1895.

(*The Divine Mother*)

[I was born in one of our sects — the Śākta.] Śāktas worship the Universal Energy as Mother. [It represents the personal power. In India *mother* is] the sweetest name [we] know; for the mother is the highest ideal of womanhood in India. [There the father does all the punishing that is done. The mother punishes never.]

When God is worshipped as Mother, as [the almighty, infinite power of] Love, the Hindus call it the "right-handed" way, and it leads to spirituality but never to material prosperity . . . (*Inspired Talks*, pp. 72-73)

[The cobra takes good care of her eggs, but as soon as the young begin to come out of the eggs, the mother eats them. Only the full-fledged get away and live. Ready-made they come, ready for battle.] [1]

Mother is the first manifestation of power, and [the Father God] is considered [a lower idea]. With the name of Mother comes the idea of Śākti, Divine Energy and Omnipotence — just as the baby believes its mother to be all-powerful, able to do anything. The Divine Mother is the Kundalini sleeping in us. [Only when She — the Mother manifest, whom dualists know as God — opens the door shall we know ourselves.] All-merciful, all-powerful, omnipresent, are attributes of the Divine Mother. She is the sum total of the energy in the universe. [Śāktas believe that those who desire power or success must worship God as Mother.

Brahman is without qualities, unknowable.] Every manifestation of power in the universe is Mother. [She is peace,] She is life, She is intelligence, She is love. She is in the universe, yet separate from it. She is a person [like you and me] and can be seen and known — as Sri Ramakrishna saw and knew Her. Established in the idea of Mother we can do anything. She quickly answers prayer.

[Those who are married look upon every woman but their wife as their Mother. But those who do not marry look upon all women as She.

She is what the world calls God.] She can show Herself to us in any form at any moment . . . (*I.T.*, p. 73)

The sum total of all the cells in an organism is one person; so each soul is like one cell, and the sum of them is God — and beyond that is the Absolute. [The Absolute does not create or preserve anything; but in another form She does.] The sea [when] calm is the Absolute; the same sea in waves is [the power of the Absolute, the] Divine Mother. She is time, space, and causation. [The word *Om* means the Absolute. The word *God* is not used of the Absolute. The Creator] is the Mother and has two natures: the conditioned and the Unconditioned. As the former She is [divided into three :] God, nature, and soul (man). As the latter She is unknown and unknowable. Out of the Unconditioned, [the Logos,] came the trinity — God, nature, and soul. The Triangle of existence. This is the Viśishtādvaitist idea.

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[1] This appears to be a reference to Mother Kali in Her terrible aspect.

[Mother — the Unitarians. Father — the Trinitarians. The first step was Mother ; She created[2] Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Beyond the Trinitarian God, the Unitarian God, and beyond even that, the Absolute. First, the personal you and I ; second, the personal you and I, yet one ; third, the Absolute, neither you nor I, the Impersonal. She (the Mother) breathes and you and I are thrown out. Thus the Śāktas believe.

The word *mother* is like an infinite ocean. Akbar, the most absolute monarch of India, carried his mother on his shoulders through the streets to show his regard for his mother. Men of special power have always been regardful of their mothers, thereby taking to themselves a tiny bit of the great Mother power.

Mother holds the power in the universe (māyā). She is the Kundalini. When She wakes up, then Her children can have or use power. The Śāktas believe that all success, all good works, all things, come through worship of God as Mother. She is the life in everything manifesting as life. She is a person — She is within me and outside me. She is at once myself and all the power there is. She talks. She can make Herself visible in any form at any time. Worship the Father and you will get the results in a hundred years ; worship the Mother, and you will get them in five minutes.

Energy is female. The Absolute is formless ; but when this energy takes form it is called Mother. Water calm is the Absolute. When the water is disturbed into waves, the moving, expressing power is Mother. She is called time, space, and causation. Om (God when thought of as absolute), becomes Hrim (God when thought of as active).

Worship Mother and you will be able to do anything.] A bit of Mother was Krishna, another was Buddha, another was Christ. [She breathes and they all come forth ; again She breathes, and draws them back to Herself. I was a Śākta in my last existence. I love them very much.] The worship of even one spark of Mother in our earthly mother leads to greatness. [I know it brings great power.] Worship Her if you want love and wisdom. (*I.T.* p. 74)

Wednesday, July 3.

Generally speaking, human religion begins with fear . . . (*I.T.* pp. 74-75)

[The hardest thing in the world is to have sympathy with *everyone*, identify oneself with all others in order to rightly understand them.[3] A dualist as a rule is less sympathetic than a monist. Dualists are tolerant to a certain extent, but being dualists, see themselves as separate from the universe. Protestants make too much of "fleeing from wrath," negation, and breaking down. Those who break down or correct others' faults are scarcely fit to build the temple. Thomas à Kempis did not talk against evil, though he was a great saint.]

The more we grow in love and virtue and holiness [inside], the more we see love and virtue and holiness [in the] outside [world]. All condemnation of others really condemns ourselves. Adjust the microcosm — which is in your power to do — and the macrocosm will adjust itself for you. It is like the "hydrostatic paradox": one drop of water can balance the universe. We cannot see outside what we are not inside. [What you see, you are inside.] The universe is to us what the huge engine is to the miniature engine; an indication of any error in the tiny engine leads us to imagine trouble in the huge one. [He who conquers his own self conquers the whole world.]

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[2] Since the words "Father, Son and Holy Ghost," though they come after "created", are placed a line below in the manuscript, one might also put a period after "created."

[3] This sentence, placed in our manuscript at the end of the July 2 entry, seems to belong with July 3. Though some of the ideas of the following material are repeated in later paragraphs of Miss Waldo's version, they are worded sufficiently differently to warrant being included here. A more coherent but arbitrary version could be made by rearranging the sentences.

Every step that has been really gained in the world has been gained by love. [Condemn or criticize none.] Criticizing can never do any good; it has been tried for thousands of years. Condemnation accomplishes nothing. (*I.T.* p. 75)

A real Vedāntist must sympathize with all . . . (I.T. pp. 75-77)

[We are born dualists, which is good; but through love we learn that we are one. Why attribute vengeance, any more than robbery, to God? He is *all* love. Madness of love should be ours. Dualism, being at the beginning and at the end, must always remain. After a glimpse of Oneness, after knowing Oneness, the Absolute objectifies Itself to enjoy the pleasure.

God separated Himself from Himself to love.] We divide ourselves into two to love God — myself loving my Self. God has created me and I have created God. [I] create God in [my own] image. It is we who create Him to be our Master; it is not God who makes us His servants. [He is not like the Persian idea of God as King.] When we know that we are one with God, that we and He are friends, then come equality and freedom. [God and I are very good friends. I live with Him, He with me, day and night. Sometimes I scold Him; sometimes He scolds me.] So long as you hold yourself separated by a hair's breadth from this Eternal One, fear cannot go.

Never ask that foolish question, "What good will it do to the world?" [Love is the end and aim of the world.] Let the world go. Love and ask nothing; love and look for nothing further. Love and forget all the "isms." Drink the cup of love and become mad. [Throw yourself into the current.] Say, "Thine, oh, Thine for ever, O Lord!" and plunge in, forgetting all else. [Take courage. Have eternal rest from all doubt and fear.] The very idea of God is love. [Why go to the temple? See God manifest wherever there is love.] Seeing a cat loving her kittens, stand and [look upon them, and then and *there*] pray. God has become manifest there; literally believe this. [Wherever love is, there God is.] Repeat, "I am Thine, I am Thine" — for we can see God everywhere. Do not seek for Him; just see Him. [As soon as you say, "I go to seek Him," you deny Him; it is like putting your hands before your face.]

"May the Lord ever keep you alive — the Light of the world, the Soul of the universe!" (*I.T.* p. 77)

[(Story of the pitcher of milk.)[4]

Once there was a great king who was surrounded by many flattering courtiers. A certain man said to him: "These men are only flattering you. I will tell you how to learn the truth about their regard for you." The king asked how this could be managed. "Call them together," said the man, "and tell them that you appreciate their deep love for you and that you wish them to show it in a rather singular way. There is a very large tank in a secluded part of your grounds. Tell your courtiers that it will be open during a dark night and that every friend of the king is requested to bring a large jug of milk and pour it, unseen by any other person, into the tank." The king did as the man suggested. The following morning he went to the tank and found it filled with water. Each courtier had thought that his jug of water would mix with the milk of the others and that his deception would not be discovered.]

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[4] This well-known story is not included in the text of *I. T.* Since in the present manuscript it appears only as a paraphrase, the story is here reworded to sound as Swami Vivekananda might have told it.

[*Thursday, July 4*,[5]

Which is the easiest way to know God? Through our own peculiar, particular nature. But do not limit yourself by saying, "Christ is all." The principle would be lost if all were in the one person.]

The Absolute cannot be worshipped; so we must worship a manifestation, such a one as has our nature . . . (*I.T.* pp. 77-78)

We make our own environment[6] and we strike the fetters [from our feet. We are the result of our own past. Then why not at once take the responsibility of your own past and be glad of the chance to suffer for your past errors, that you may thereby come nearer a true balance—the centre?

Cowards can never be saved.] The Ātman is the fearless.

When we pray to a God outside, it is good, only we do not know what we do. When we know the Self, we understand. The highest expression of love is unification.[7] [(In illustration of which he quoted these lines:)

"I first saw him and he saw me;
There was a flash of eye from me to him and from him to me.][8]
There was a time when I was a woman and he was a man;
[Then, as love grew, I forgot that I was a woman and he was a man;]
Still love grew until there was neither he nor I.
[Then farther I can see but one;]
Only I remember faintly [a time when we were two—]
But love came between and [fused us into one]."[9]

—*Persian Sufi poem.*

Knowledge exists eternally and is co-existent with God. . . (*I.T.* pp. 78-79)

[As the Catholics fetter the world by images and so on, so the Protestants do by books.] The Church tries to fit Christ into it, not the Church into Christ; so only those writings were preserved that suited the purpose in hand. Thus the books are not to be depended upon, and book-worship is the worst kind of idolatry to bind our feet. All has to conform to the book—science, religion, philosophy. It is the most horrible tyranny [in the world], this tyranny of the Protestant Bible. Every man in Christian countries has a huge cathedral on his head and on top of that a Book, and yet man lives and grows! Does this not prove that man is God? [It is better to start again, like the Moslems, burning the books, than live under such tyranny.[10]

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[5] There is no entry for this date in *I. T.*, the material from our manuscript corresponding to that in *I. T.* being included there under July 3.

[6] Our manuscript has the word "circumstances" here.

[7] Since this sentence is identical in both versions, it may be accepted as Swami Vivekananda's exact words.

[8] These lines are placed by Miss Waldo, less logically, in the entry for August 2, followed by a brief prose summary of the remainder of the poem. The following lines occur in both versions with minor variations.

[9] Except for the addition of the first two lines and the fourth and sixth, the content of the two versions is similar. It has therefore seemed advisable to adopt in those parts that correspond the best wording of each.

[10] The first sentence of this paragraph might also come after the next two sentences; but the word "books" would then have to be changed to "the book." The obvious superiority of Miss Waldo's version of this passage to the mere paraphrase in our manuscript shows how careful we must be in

Whatever induces freedom is moral, and whatever induces bondage is immoral and a sin. Be not bound. Come out of it !]

Man is the highest being that exists and this is the greatest world. . . (*I.T.* p. 79) Man is the apex of the only world we can ever know. [All you understand you make into your world. Human life in its various forms is all the life you know.] [11] All we know of animals is only by analogy : we judge them by what we do and feel ourselves.

The sum total of knowledge is ever the same. . . (*I.T.* p. 80)

[Even in this life they have conquered heaven who have attained sameness. Thus seeing the same Lord present in every being, a man no longer kills Himself by himself.] Those who have attained sameness are said to be living in God. All hatred is killing the Self by the self. Therefore love is the law of life.[12] [Hatred is suicide : if I have not love I am nothing.] To rise to this is to be perfect ; but the more perfect we are, the less work, so called, can we do. The sāttvikas see and know that all is mere child's-play and do not trouble themselves about anything. . .(*I.T.* p. 80)

Saturday, July 6.

(*Today we had Śankarāchārya's commentary on Vyāsa's Vedānta Sutras.*)

Om Tat Sat

[Śankara was a young monk who wrote about the age of sixteen.] According to Śankara there are two phases of the universe : one is " I " and the other " thou," and they are as contrary as light and darkness. . . (*I.T.* p. 82) Matter and the external world are but the soul in a certain state ; [but] in reality there [*is*] only [*One*].[13]

All our world comes from truth and untruth coupled together. Samsāra (life) is the result of the contradictory forces acting upon us, like the diagonal motion of a ball in a parallelogram of forces. The world is God and is real, [eternal,] but that is [*not the world we see*]—just as we see silver in the mother-of-pearl where it is not. . . (I.T. pp. 82-83) We see reality, but distorted by the medium through which we see it.

You can never know yourself except as objectified. . . (I.T. pp. 83-84) [14]

God exists—not birth or death, not pain, nor misery, nor murder, nor change, nor good or evil. All is Brahman. We " take the rope for the serpent " ; the error is [*ours*]. . . We can only do good when we love [the world as] [15] God and He reflects our love. . . (*I.T.* pp. 84-85)

In one sense Brahman is known to every human being. . . (*I.T.* pp. 85-86)) Our own realization is beyond the Vedas, because even they depend upon that. The highest

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preferring variants in the latter to her version. And yet this paragraph also shows that interesting additions to the thought are to be found in our version. Moreover, not all the selections are as plainly paraphrases as is the present one.

[11] In our manuscript the first sentence of the paragraph from which these two sentences come is obviously a rough paraphrase of Swami Vivekananda. The two sentences themselves are very questionably accurate, but are included as possibly adding something to the paragraph's content. The last two sentences of the paragraph in the manuscript belong to several paragraphs later in *I. T.*

[12] Except for the word "therefore," the two versions of this sentence are identical and hence can be accepted as Swami Vivekananda's exact words.

[13] From here onward the notes in our manuscript are much closer to the corresponding sentences from *I. T.*

[14] In the corresponding passage in our manuscript are a number of sentences practically identical with *I. T.* They are omitted here.

[15] The word " as " is a conjecture, there being a space in our notes between the words " world " and " God." But the sense of the passage justifies the addition.

[teaching of the Vedas] [16] is the philosophy of the Beyond. [Whatever I get or take from another, for a help to me, even if it be from my wife, but hinders my true development. I *must* help myself or I will never be helped, believe in myself or I will never be believed in.] [17]

To say that creation has any beginning is to lay the axe at the root of all philosophy... (*I.T.* p. 86)

Monday, July 8.

Rāmānuja says: The Vedas are the holiest study. . . (*I.T.* p. 89) Liberty is nothing more than destruction of ignorance, and [perfect destruction of ignorance] can only [come to us] when we know Brahman. It is not necessary to go through all these ceremonials to reach the meaning of the Vedānta. Repeating Om is enough.

Seeing difference is the cause of all misery. . . (*I.T.* pp. 90-91)

Tuesday, July 9.

Man as Ātman is really free.... (*I.T.* pp. 91-93)

The ancient Hindus were wonderful scholars, veritable living encyclopaedias. They said: "Knowledge in books and money in other people's [pockets] is like no money and no knowledge at all." [18]

Śankara was regarded by many as an incarnation of Śiva. (*I.T.* p. 93)

Wednesday, July 10.

There are sixty-five million Mohammedans in India. . . (*I.T.* pp. 93-96)

Vedānta is necessary because neither reasoning nor books can show us God. He is only to be realized by superconscious perception, and Vedānta teaches how to attain that. You must get beyond Personal God (Iśvara) and reach the Absolute Brahman. [Because] God is [*in*] the perception of every being, [therefore he is capable of the realization of God. Thereby do we *know* God.] He is all there is to be perceived. [If Brahman (the Absolute) is in the perception of every being, what do we gain or lose by knowing this? We don't necessarily gain *things,* but we gain *ourselves.*] That which says "I" is Brahman. ... (*I.T.* p. 96)

Brahmavidyā is the highest knowledge, because it is knowing the Brahman; lower knowledge is science. This is the teaching of the Mundakopanishad, or the Upanishad for Sanyāsins. [Knowledge cannot be without previous knowledge; therefore knowledge has no beginning or end.] There are two sorts of knowledge — principal and secondary. The unessential is that part of the Vedas dealing with worship and ceremonial, also all secular knowledge. The essential is that by which we reach the Absolute.

It (the Absolute) creates all from Its own nature; there is nothing to cause, nothing outside. It is all energy; It is all there is. [I cannot explain to you how the Absolute becomes the finite. It is true that the ego, to see itself, must objectify itself.][19]. . . (*I.T.* pp. 96-97)

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[16] Our notes have here "the highest Vedas" and Miss Waldo has "the highest Vedanta." The word "Vedas" fits into the passage better than "Vedanta." Hence the addition.

[17] Because of the unsatisfactory construction of the first of these two sentences, it has been necessary to add a few conjectural words. The doubtful phrase "even if it be from my wife" might simply be omitted without destroying the sense.

[18] This passage occurs in our notes at the end of the entry for July 10.

Thursday, July 11.

Without mother love no creation could continue. . . (*I.T.* pp. 97-100)

Love concentrates [easily, without much effort,] all the power of the will, as when a man falls in love with a woman. [Every step is happiness.][20] . . . (*I.T.* p. 100-101)

[Give up yourself to Him (God) and never question. "In search of one to love, I sacrifice myself to Thee. Draw me to Thee."] "Thine am I for ever; henceforth whatever I do, it is Thou doing it. No more is there any me or mine.". . . (*I.T.* p. 101)

Choose the highest ideal and give your life up to that. Death being certain,[21] it is the [best] thing to give up life [to a high] purpose. . . (*I.T.* pp. 101-102)

Friday, July 12.

(*Śankara's Commentary*)

Fourth Vyāsa sutra: "Ātman (is) the aim of all.". . . (*I.T.* pp. 102-103) This cessation of ignorance can only come when I [*know*] that [I and God] are one. In other words, identify yourself with Ātman, not with [upādhis,] human limitations. *Dis*-identify yourself with the body, and all pain will cease. This is the SECRET[22] of healing. The universe is a case of hypnotization; de-hypnotize yourself and cease to suffer. [The moment you identify yourself with anything but God, misery begins with you.]. . . (*I.T.* p. 103)

Whenever you learn (gain anything) from[23] another man's words, know that you had the experience in a previous existence, because experience is the only teacher. . . (*I.T.* p. 104)

[My mind is the ego objectified, the "myself" objectified so that I can see I.] "Mind is not God." (Śankara). . . What is disjoined will be for ever disjoined; if you are separate from God, then you can never be one with Him, and vice versa. If [virtues join you] to God, when [they cease] disjunction will come. The junction is eternal and [the virtues] only [help] to ["]remove the veil.["]. . . (*I.T.* pp. 104-105)

The idea that we are bound is only an illusion. [No one can tell the way to liberty until he *is* liberty itself. He who follows the God of truth—to him the God of truth reveals Himself.][24]. . . (*I.T.* p. 105)

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[19] Of the eleven separate quotations that follow under this same entry of July 10, in our manuscript, all but three—Nos. 8, 10, and 11—clearly belong to July 11 and 12. We can explain the July 11 date for the next entry in our manuscript by assuming that the original note-taker began copying from Miss Waldo from the day her own notes became negligible, and simply dated the entry thus because the last entry was dated July 10. Why the separate quotations Nos. 8, 10, and 11—which *I. T.* places on July 8 (p. 91), July 3 (p. 77), and July 9 (p. 93), respectively—are entered here can be explained if we assume that Miss Waldo saw fit to alter their position in the text of *I. T.* But this seems unlikely. The other quotations from the July 10 entry are here placed in their probable positions on July 11 and 12, along with further variants from the independent entries for these two dates.

[20] These two sentences have been constructed from the version in our July 10 entry, an almost identical one in our July 11 entry, and Miss Waldo's version in *I. T.* The quotation in the July 11 entry reads: "Love concentrates without our effort all the power of the will, every step is happiness."

[21] The text of *I. T.* has here: "Death being so certain," but the version in our notes sounds more natural.

[22] This word is twice underlined in our manuscript. It is interesting to note that Miss Dutcher, perhaps even as early as 1895, was much concerned with the subject of spiritual healing. In later years she herself practised it.

[23] The opening of this sentence, in our manuscript, reads: "Whenever you are taught by."

[24] Our manuscript has, actually, "No one can say the way to liberty." The second of these sentences is identical with one on page 91 of *I. T.*, under July, 8, except for the words "with devotion" after "God of truth."

"Brahman is that which you can never drive out by any power of mind or imagination." (Śankara) [Even the insane man, or he who dreams, even while he dreams knows that he himself is back of the dreamer. If he thinks himself dead, the thinker stands back of that which died.] [25]

Saturday, July 13

Everything we know is a compound...(*I.T.* p. 106) The idea of unthinking philosophers was that the mind was simple,[26] and this led them to believe in [“]free will.[”] [The mind seen by the eyes is what we call the body—the impression made upon the clay by the thought.[27]

Reaction against perception is consciousness.]

The agnostic says this idea is a delusion... (*I.T.* pp. 106-107) The free can be only one, the Unconditioned, the Infinite, the Unlimited. [If there were a second, there would be interdependence and that would not be freedom.] Freedom in man is now a memory, an attempt towards freedom.

The whole secret of existence is [:] have no fear. Never fear what will become of you. [We do not *require* a guru. Know : I depend on no one ; I have all I need, I no more need a teacher. All a guru is for, is to teach us that we do not need a teacher.] Only the moment you reject all help are you free. The [*full*] sponge can absorb no more.[28] (*I.T.* p. 108)

Monday, July 29

A baby sees robbery done and it means nothing to him. [These puzzle pictures—when] once you find the [dog or face] in [the] puzzle,[29] you see it ever [after, as] when once you are free and stainless you see only freedom and purity in the world around. (*I.T.* p. 149)

Three great gifts we have : First, a [*human body*]. (The human mind is the nearest reflection of God ; we are "His own image.") Second, the desire to be free. Third, the help of a noble soul who has crossed [to the other side of] [30] the ocean of delusion, as a teacher.

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[25] From here on our manuscript appears to be copied entirely from Miss Waldo's notes. A few passages with significant differences, which Miss Waldo perhaps chose to omit, are added here. Throughout this section there are a number of smaller differences which would interest only a close student of the text of *I. T.*

[26] *I. T.* has "a simple," while our manuscript has the word "single" without the indefinite article. "Simple" would seem to be more idiomatic and would still indicate the meaning intended, namely, the opposite of a compound.

[27] In our manuscript the word "by" occurs before the words "the impression," but it has been omitted here for the sake of clarity.

[28] In place of the three sentences in brackets, Miss Waldo's version in *I. T.* gives only : "Depend on no one." Obviously she omitted these revolutionary statements for fear of misinterpretation. But there can be no doubt of their authenticity, for the words before and after them are identical with the published text.

[29] The word "picture," included here in the text of *I. T.*, was doubtless added because of the omission of the first four words of the sentence. The words "hidden object," given by Miss Waldo, are much less graphic than "dog or face."

[30] Our notes have only "to the other side." Miss Waldo's have, instead, "the ocean of delusion," for the sake of greater clarity. Both have been kept here, though Swami Vivekananda very likely did not use the second phrase.

When you have these three, [you have made the "lucky throw of the dice,"] [31] you are sure to be free.

Saturday, August 3

There is a vast difference between saying "food, food" and eating it, between saying ["wine, wine"] [32] and drinking it. (*I.T.* p. 172)

All relatives and friends are but "old dry wells"; we fall into them and get dreams of duty and bondage, and there is no end... (*I.T.* p. 174-175) This tyrannical idea of duty is a terrible poison and is destroying the world. [There is no duty—love is all there is. That which you do from any motive but that of love, may as well not be done.]

Sunday, August 4

["Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, Him I declare unto you."] [33] This one and only God is the "knownest" [34] of the known. He is the one thing we see everywhere. (*I.T.* p. 176)

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[31] Miss Waldo has here, simply, "bless the Lord." Our version, which rings much more true and could not possibly have been invented, goes far to establish not only the reliability of the copyist but also the fact that we have here Miss Waldo's unedited notes.

[32] These words have been changed to "water, water" in *I. T.*

[33] Curiously enough, in *I. T.* Miss Waldo saw fit to alter this quotation from *Acts* 17:23 into: "Whom the ignorant worship, Him I preach unto you." Her unedited notes, as copied into our manuscript, gave the quotation exactly as in the Bible, except for the word "therefore."

[34] The word "known[n]ess," found in our manuscript, is a challenging variant, but doubtless Miss Waldo had heard Swamiji use this phrase elsewhere and so concluded she had originally written the word wrongly. It seems best to adhere to the published version.

OBITUARY

SWAMI SASWATANANDA

We announce with deep sorrow the passing away of Swami Saswatananda, aged 69, at the Belur Math on the 27th August at 10-02 p.m. For about two years he was suffering from heart trouble. For the third time within a year he was hospitalised on the 29th July. His condition gradually deteriorated and at last when the condition had become hopeless, to fulfil his wish, he was brought to the Math on the 23rd August in the afternoon fully conscious. Till that time he could recognize persons and could also speak, though it was very difficult to understand exactly what he said. His condition then deteriorated fast in spite of the best efforts of the doctors who attended on him constantly and the end came on the 27th August.

The Swami joined the Home of Service at Varanasi in 1919. A disciple of Srimat Swami Shivanandaji, he had his Sannyasa also from him. From 1925 to 1928 he was the Warden of the Madras Students' Home. From 1929 he was a member of the Working Committee at the Headquarters till 1936. He was the President of the Madras Math from 1936 to 1944 in which year he came back to the Headquarters. In 1947 he was made a Trustee and an Assistant Secretary of the Math and Mission which post he held till his death. He was also the President of the Saradapitha since 1959.

An austere monk, he possessed a loving heart. Many a soul, especially young men, who came in touch with him were very much benefited and inspired. While in the South he had won the heart of many. In his demise the organisation has sustained a great loss. May his soul rest in peace.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

At the very outset we offer our apologies for the inordinate delay of the last issue. Secondly we regret that in spite of our announcement in July, 1963, to resume some of the serialized articles we had discontinued, because of the special issue in August, 1963, it has not been possible to do so.

Swami Śuddhananda is a disciple of Swami Vivekananda and fifth President of the Order. His article is the concluding portion of what appeared in the last issue and is reprinted from *Prabuddha Bharata*, of January, 1931.

Swami Budhananda is Assistant Minister, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York.

Dr J. M. G. Fell, Ph.D. is Associate Professor in the Department of Mathematics, University of Washington, Seattle, U.S.A.

Swami Atmaghanananda's article is the second part of it, the first part appeared in the last number.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FATALISTIC TREND IN OUR MASSES

Much confusion is evident in the minds of people not only professing other religions but even among Hindus themselves—Hindus, who have been educated in the Western way of thinking—about the theory of *karma*. For one thing, the theory of karma is not, as some politicians think, an attitude of fatalism, to take everything lying down. The question then will be why do people so meekly submit to all types of atrocities? Because they have not been taught to stand up against insults. After years of slavery and being trampled under the foot of the rich, as well as foreign ruling powers for more than a thousand years it is natural that the masses still find it difficult to believe that they are any more than slaves or serfs. Even after independence their lot has remained much the same. The difference between the haves and the have-nots is too vast. In the face of these heavy odds—when even after whole day's labour a man cannot get sufficient to maintain his body and soul together—if he thinks that it is his karma to suffer who is responsible for it? Now if even after fifteen years of independence our politicians have not, in spite of their professed goal of socialistic society, been able to improve the lot of the masses to any appreciable extent, it is not the fault of the people, if they take that it is their lot to suffer.

It is adding insult to injury if you say that people are fatalistic-minded and all that sort of thing when you withhold all the ways to improvements—educational and economical—from them. The responsibility is of those who are in power to educate them. Why have they not been able to educate the masses, to provide employment and give them proper equipment to improve the ways of cultivation and the like? The same type of education as that existed during the bureaucratic form of Government still continues. Plans are laid out which India cannot independently, without the aid of foreign countries, dream of carrying out. We are to wait and wait and crane our necks as to whether the aid is coming or not! By this we do not mean that we should spurn anyone's help or should not seek it. What we say is that we have to plan in such a way that we can carry out a major portion of the projects without the aid, if it is not forthcoming. 'Independence is that which independently does.' If those who are in power depend on some other country for the prosecution of their plans why should they blame the poor peasant who rests on God or his Karma, or his *punya* or *papa* or whatever you may call it?

A Western thinker says, ' It is not the greatness of a man's means that makes him independent, so much as the smallness of his wants.' India on the other hand is going the other way, with the result that the gulf between the rich and the poor is widening. For they have no other people to exploit but their own masses and that is what is happening. And what has been done to prevent or remedy this state of affairs? Still if the poor man takes it lying down and alludes to his karma he is to be vilified, castigated, and given any name any one likes! If this is not adding insult to injury we do not know what else it can be!

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

GOD-EXPERIENCE: By Swami Ramdas. P. 244. Price Rs. 2.00. Pub. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay-7.

This is a useful compilation of the talks by Swami Ramdas to his disciples and devotees during the first five months of 1961. Talks of this type are always more intelligible and helpful to the common seeker than metaphysical treatises for the reason that in the former the teacher comes down to the level of the questioner and explains precisely what he fails to understand from books.

The variety of subjects covered in these pages is large: ethics, philosophy, sadhana, scriptures, human relations. Though Swamiji is known most for his emphasis on Nama-Japa as the surest means for self-realization, his advice to the votaries of Karma and Jnana Margas is no less authentic. Some of his observations on attitudes and actions in spiritual life are of a type that cannot be found in books. Here we quote for instance on silence:

'Outer silence may be helpful in attaining inner silence. Outer silence is not the thing. There are so many who have outer silence and no inner silence. You may talk and still have inner silence.' (P. 183).

We do hope this is only the first of the series and more will follow in due course. The compiler deserves to be thanked for the taste and accuracy with which he has done his part.

M. P. PANDIT.

THE CREED OF SAINT VINOBA: By Vasant Nargolkar. Pub. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay-7. P. 307. Price Rs. 2.00.

This is the first readable and connected account to appear of the life and work of Acharya Vinoba who is a unique phenomenon of post-independent India. The Acharya is perhaps the only living public figure who has established himself in the hearts of his countrymen by the sheer sincerity of his dedication to the services of *Daridranarayan*. The author devotes the first chapter of the book to a biographical sketch of the Acharya underlying his qualities of courage, grit and industry from his very childhood.

There is an informative chapter on the various far-flung writings of Vinoba which give a glimpse into the working of his mind. The rest of the book contains a well-digested presentation of the leader's philosophy of life in its social, political, religious and ethical aspects. As is well known, Vinobaji, has strong views on all subjects and the author whose opinions are equally categorical has done full justice to them drawing upon various scriptures and thinkers in their support.

M. P. PANDIT.

THE INSPIRING PRECEPTS FROM THE DIVINE PEN OF SRI SRI THAKUR HARANATH: Compiled by A. Ramakrishna Sastri. Published by Kuchimanch Ramachandra Rao, Moberlipeta, Amalapuram, E. G. Dist., Andhra Pradesh. Pages 235. Price Rs. 2.

Herein we find the precepts of the holy person Sri Sri Thakur Haranath, who trod in the path of winning God through affection and raganuga bhakti. The goal of life is the acquisition of Prema, spoken of in the Vaishnava Sastras. Through the mission of Love, he won many people to his creed.

The introduction is full of missionary zeal of Thakur Haranath and is well-written. The contents of the book cover within a short compass, the essentials of spiritualism and God-head. The Precepts, in all, reveal originality, substance and wisdom of the sacred lore.

T. S. RAGHAVAN.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

RAMAKRISHNA-VIVEKANANDA CENTRE, NEW YORK

The Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary celebrations started at the Centre with the worship of Sri Ramakrishna on January 17, 1963, the day of the observation of the Swamiji's birth. Ritualistic worship with sixteen ingredients (shodashopachara) was performed in the forenoon, ending with arati and group-singing of hymns. The devotees participating partook of consecrated food after the worship.

The first public function in connection with the Centenary was held at the Centre on Sunday, January 20, 1963. In the chapel, specially decorated with flowers, the morning service began with Hindu devotional music, including the group-singing of a hymn. Swami Nikhilananda conducted the service and spoke on: "Swami Vivekananda: India and America." After the service light refreshments were served.

The report of the Centenary dinner of March 28, 1963 at new York which was the second function has already appeared in the *Vedanta Kesari* of June '63.

AT THE NEW INDIA HOUSE, NEW YORK

The third meeting sponsored by the Centre in connection with the Centenary was held at the New India House, the Consulate General of India, at 8 p.m. on April 18, 1963. The Honourable S. K. Roy, Consul General of India, presided over the meeting, which started with a prayer by Swami Budhananda. His Excellency B. N. Chakravarty, Head of the Indian Delegation at the United Nations, spoke of Swami Vivekananda as 'one of the pioneers of the Indian Renaissance and creators of modern India,' whose work in the West was yielding fruits now both in East and West. Professor Ainslie T. Embree, of the Committee on Oriental Studies, Columbia University, made a thoughtful and well-informed speech on 'Vivekananda and Indian Nationalism.' Swami Nikhilananda gave a lucid presentation of the main inspirational themes of Swami Vivekananda's great life. The meeting ended with a prayer by Swami Budhananda.

IN PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA

A Swami Vivekananda Centenary Celebration was organized by the India Association of Pittsburgh (about five hundred miles from New York). Invited by the Association, Swami Budhananda went to the city on April 19, 1963. On the same day he was twice interviewed on television and once on the radio. During these three interviews and in a press interview next morning, questions were answered in regard to Swami Vivekananda, the Birth Centenary, and its significance. On April 20, at 8-30 p.m., a public meeting—attended by almost equal numbers of Indians and Americans — was held at the Unitarian Church of Pittsburgh. Dr. Freedman, of the Carnegie Institute of Technology, presided over the meeting. Dr. George B. Fowler, Professor of History at the University of Pittsburgh, spoke on 'Swami Vivekananda, the Great Representative of the Spirit of India.' Swami Budhananda spoke on 'Swami Vivekananda and Modern Man's Spiritual Quest.'

The meeting began with a musical rendering of Sanskrit hymns, sung in chorus. After the speeches a Vedic hymn was sung. The meeting was concluded with a peace chant by Swami Budhananda. After the meeting light refreshments were served.

AT THE COMMUNITY CHURCH OF NEW YORK

A Swami Vivekananda Centenary Meeting, sponsored jointly by the Community Church and the Centre was held at the Church at 4 p.m. on April 28, 1963. The Reverend Donald S. Harrington, Minister of the Church, paid a warm tribute to Swami Vivekananda, whose work, in a short life, has been enduringly influencing both Eastern and Western religious thought. Swami Nikhilananda spoke on the great Swami's life and expounded the significance of his teaching in the world of our times. Dr. Huston Smith, Head of the Philosophy Department of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, in the course of narrating the life of Swami Vivekananda, unfolded its uniqueness and its contribution to spiritual thought and human well-being.

AT THE ASIA SOCIETY OF NEW YORK

Under the joint sponsorship of the India Council of the Asia Society and the Centre, the Vivekananda Centenary was celebrated at 8.30 p.m. at the Asia Society, on May 9, 1963. Mr. Lionel Landry, Acting Executive Director of the Society, presided.

In his speech on 'Swami Vivekananda: A Religion for Today,' Swami Budhananda pointed out the manifold services rendered by the Swamiji to the basic religion of man. Professor Ainslie T. Embree, of Columbia University, spoke on: 'India Today: A Problem in Interpretation.' He considered the many images of India that people in the West cherished in the last several centuries and showed how Swami Vivekananda's cast of India's image came to prevail. Professor Amiya Chakravarty, of the Department of Comparative and Oriental Religions and Literature, Boston University, speaking on 'Vivekananda, Prophet of East-West Democracy,' underscored the felicity with which Swami Vivekananda brought about a fruitful encounter between the cherished values of East and West, himself being at home in both. After the speeches some questions were answered by the speakers.

IN TIRUNELVELI AND RAMANATHAPURAM DISTRICTS

The Vivekananda Society (Registered), Tirunelveli arranged a district wide celebrations of Swami Vivekananda's birth centenary.

TIRUNELVELI

At their invitation, Swami Suddhasatwananda, Secretary, Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Committee, Madras State, accompanied by Swami Sarvajnananda and Br. Hari Chaitanya went over to Tirunelveli on July 6, 1963. The office-bearers of the Society and the elite of the town received him at the station. Celebrations commenced from the next day, the 7th morning. In a decorated pandal, Swami Suddhasatwananda performed special puja and homa. About 250 poor people were fed. A public meeting, with Sri Gopalakrishna Aiyar in the chair, was arranged in Nellai Music Sabha compound. Swami Suddhasatwananda and others addressed the gathering. About a thousand people attended. Sri S. Ratnam proposed a vote of thanks. After the meeting Swami Sarvajnananda, arranged for the screening of a film on Sri Ramakrishna's life, with a Tamil commentary by himself; about thousand five hundred people attended. Pictorial exhibition on the life of Swami Vivekananda was arranged at a local temple by Sri Mantram, teacher, Ramakrishna Mission High School, Madras.

ALWAR TIRUNAGARI AND SRIVAIKUNTAM

On the 8th, the party went to Alwar Tirunagari, the birth place of the famous Vaishnavite Saint, Nammalwar. The local Hindu High School arranged a function to celebrate the Centenary. Swami Suddhasatwananda who presided, unveiled a portrait of Swami Vivekananda and spoke on the occasion. The speech was translated by one of the Tamil teachers. Br. Hari Chaitanya addressed the gathering in Tamil. In the afternoon, a public meeting was arranged at the spacious lawn of the Kumaraguruparan Swamigal High School at Srivaikuntham. The Chief Munsif presided and Swami Suddhasatwananda and Br. Hari Chaitanya addressed the large gathering. Sri Mantram performed Harikatha on the life of Swamiji. Here too the exhibition was arranged and the film screened.

ALWAR KURICHI AND SHENCOTTAH

On the 9th, Swami Suddhasatwananda unveiled a portrait of Swami Vivekananda at the college newly started at Alwar Kurichi and addressed the staff and students. In the evening, a big meeting was arranged at Board High School Hall, Shencottah. Sri M. P. Sivajnanam delivered an inspiring speech in Tamil. Swami Suddhasatwananda addressed the gathering in English. The meeting was presided over by the Munsif. After the meeting, screening of the film on Sri Ramakrishna's life was arranged by Swami Sarvajnananda.

KOILPATTI

On the 10th, a meeting was arranged at the local Siva Temple. Swami Suddhasatwananda and others addressed the gathering and the film was shown.

SATTUR

On the 11th, the local Centenary Committee arranged a meeting at the spacious Temple compound. Film show was arranged as usual.

SIVAKASI

On the 12th, Sri M. P. S. S. Nataraja Nadar, Secretary of the local Swami Vivekananda Centenary Committee arranged the celebration at Sri Viswanatha Temple. Exhibition was arranged at the entrance on the previous day. Portraits of Sri Ramakrishna, Sri Sarada Devi and Swami Vivekananda were beautifully decorated in the prayer hall in front of Lord Viswanath, where Swami Suddhasatwananda performed Shodashopachar Puja and Homa. A large number of devotees attended. Swami Suddhasatwananda addressed the staff and the students of the local girls' High School, Municipal High School and the Hindu Nadar High School. All the 1000 students, members of the staff and prominent members of the public attended the function at the Hindu Nadar High School. He also inaugurated the condensed S.S.L.C. course after performing worship of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda.

In the evening he addressed a big public meeting arranged at the premises of Sri Viswanatha Temple; it was presided over by Sri Ramakrishnan, Inspector of Explosives. Swami Sarvajnananda also spoke on the occasion.

TUTICORIN

The concluding function took place on the 14th at Tuticorin. Swami Suddhasatwananda performed Shodasopachar Puja and Homa in the morning at the Annammal Girls' High School Hall. Portraits of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda were tastefully decorated on the spacious dais. Sayings of Swami Vivekananda and other saints were prominently displayed on all sides and about 300 devotees attended the Puja and Homa.

In the afternoon there was a public meeting presided over by Srimati Vajreswari, Principal, Annammal Training College. Swami Suddhasatwananda addressed the meeting in English. The Tamil Professor of the local college spoke in Tamil. Film show was arranged after the meeting with commentary in Tamil by Swami Sarvajnananda.

Next morning Swami Suddhasatwananda addressed the staff and trainees of the Annammal Training College.

Sri Rajamani Nadar, Sri A. R. A. S. Natarajan, Sri A. R. A. S. Arumugaswamy and Sri Padmanabha Iyer, President, Vice-President and office bearers respectively of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Committee worked hard to make the celebration a success.

People all through evinced keen interest and participated in the functions whole-heartedly.

VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY BUILDING SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS-4.

The Swami Vivekananda centenary building at Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras was completed and the religious ceremonies regarding its consecration took place on August 21, 1963. It was a solemn function. Portraits of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swami Vivekananda were placed on an elevated platform in the centre of the hall on the ground floor of the building. The pictures of Sri Ramachandra and Goddess Saraswati were placed, each on either side of the above pictures on separate pedestals. The entire hall inside, the building outside and the 300 feet long pathway leading from the main road to the building were brightly decorated with festoons and flags, ferns and leaves. Special puja of Sri Ramakrishna with Homa was performed. Devi Mahatmyam and select passages from the Gita and the Upanishads were chanted. Vedic rites such as *vastu homa* were performed by priests. The worship which started at 6-30 a.m. lasted till 9-30 a.m., after which the premises surrounding the building and the building itself were sanctified by sprinkling of holy waters. There was a large congregation throughout the ceremony. Prasad was then distributed to the assembled devotees. In the evening after *aratrikam* in the shrine of the Math, there was Ramanam in the building. More than 800 people attended the Ramanam.

The building has two floors. The ground floor will house (1) Sri Ramakrishna Centenary library, (2) a children's library corner and (3) a reading room. On the first floor provision has been made for an auditorium with a seating capacity for about 800 people. One of the perpetual attractions of the children's corner will be the life-like paintings depicting some incidents of Swami Vivekananda's childhood adorning the walls. Some of these pictures have appeared in our last issue. The artist, Sri Visvaranjan Chakravarti, M.A., of Calcutta deserves our special gratitude for this labour of love. Pictures of some of the important incidents of Swamiji's life adorn the sides of the platform of the auditorium on the first floor too.

The formal opening of the building will be performed sometime in January, 1964.

VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY COMMITTEE, BANGALORE

REPORT OF NORTH KARNATAKA TOUR

As a part of the Centenary Celebrations and to spread the message of Swamiji, a lecture-tour was undertaken in North Karnataka. The programme was organized mainly with the kind help and under the guidance of Sri R. S. Hukerikar of Dharwar. During the course of the nine-day tour (June 30 to July 8) the party covered a distance of about a thousand miles and visited Chitradurga, Davanagere, Ranebennur, Hanumanmatti, Haveri, Hubli, Hulkote, Gadag-Betgeri, Dharwar, Belgaum and Chikkodi. Swamis Adidevananda and Sastrananda addressed 23 meetings in Kannada or English according to need. The meetings were organized under the auspices of the local Rotary Clubs, Colleges or Schools, or Religious and Cultural Associations. In all about four thousand people — men, women and children — from all walks of life attended the functions. They were quite interested in the life and message of Swamiji and participated in the meetings with enthusiasm. Apart from talks, in most places display and sale of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature were organized with very encouraging results. In some meetings there was Bhajan also.

It was a very pleasing and educative experience to come in contact with the various sections of the people of North Karnataka and note their interest in the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Movement and ideals.

The party is indebted to various persons and organizations who extended them warm reception, generous hospitality and arranged the meetings.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVA PRATISHTHAN, CALCUTTA

Opening of the General Hospital Block

The general hospital block of the Ramakrishna Mission Seva Pratishthan, Calcutta, was opened by Sri Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India on July 1, 1963. The Governors of Maharashtra and West Bengal and the Chief Minister Sri P. C. Sen of West Bengal accompanied the Prime Minister. Speaking on the occasion the Prime Minister recalled his visit to the institute, a quarter century ago, when the institute was an humble effort. He said he was glad to visit it again when it had grown and wished it every success.

At the request of Sri P. C. Sen the Prime Minister also planted in the premises of the Pratishthan a rare flowering plant in inauguration of the *Vana Mahotsava.*

The function was arranged in a nicely decorated pandal in which accommodation had been made for 1000 invitees. A large number of distinguished people including a few Central and State Ministers attended the function. The All India Radio covered the function and broadcast the same at night on the same day.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, KANKHAL, HARDWAR

(*A Charitable Hospital*)

REPORT FOR 1961-62

The Ashrama conducts an Indoor Hospital and an Outdoor Dispensary. The Indoor Hospital consists of 50 beds. The total number of cases treated during the period was 1441. Of the total number 1278 were medical and 163 surgical cases, including 10 major ones. The Outdoor Dispensary is divided into (1) General, (2) Surgical, (3) Dental, (4) Eye and E.N.T. The total number of patients treated in each department is 86,780, 779, 340, and 1,815 respectively. The Pathological Department examined 3,545 specimens and 621 X-rays were taken during the period.

The Electrotherapy department treated 609 cases.

The Ashrama Library had 4,245 books and received 32 journals and magazines and 5 newspapers. 1,727 books were lent during the period under review.

Birthday celebrations of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda were observed.

During the Kumbha Mela, i.e. in the months of March and April 1962, the Sevashrama extended its permanent activities and did medical relief work for the pilgrims. During the Mela months 403 indoor cases and 21,592 outdoor cases were treated at the Sevashrama. Arrangements were made for the accommodation of 600 pilgrims. About 450 pilgrims and 130 sadhus were accommodated during the period.

The immediate needs of the Ashrama are (1) endowments for 29 beds, (2) funds for construction of a double storeyed ward capable of accommodating 40 beds in replacement of the old and leaky wards and (3) monastic workers' quarters. The Management express their heartfelt thanks to the kind-hearted public who helped them to conduct the above mentioned activities efficiently and appeal to the generous public to contribute liberally towards these needs.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION SEVASHRAMA, VRINDABAN

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1961-62

The Sevashrama is a hospital with indoor and outdoor sections. Started in 1907 with a modest beginning it has been rendering useful service for 55 years now. The institution has shifted to its spacious new buildings with 100 beds, in March, 1962. The total number of cases (including eye) admitted in the Indoor Hospital was 2,129. Total Surgical Operations performed during the year was 1,139. The Nandababa Eye Hospital which is a special feature of the Sevashrama treated 815 indoor cases and 9,750 outdoor cases. The Outdoor Dispensary treated 45,317 new cases and 1,33,659 old cases, the daily average being 490. The Homoeopathy Department treated 9,023 new cases and 22,459 old cases. The total number of cases examined in the X-ray department was 284. 31 pairs of spectacles were distributed to poor eye patients free. Monthly and occasional pecuniary help was given to 12 persons. The management express their gratefulness to the donors and subscribers and appeal for more annual donations so that its activities may not be hampered for want of funds.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS, MADRAS

An Appeal for Contributions

Everyone knows that the inauguration of the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda, the great patriot saint of India, took place with all solemnity in January, 1963. Since then celebrations have been going on not only in different parts of India but outside of India as well.

Madras being very closely associated with Swami Vivekananda, it has been decided to celebrate the main centenary celebrations here from 5th to 20th January, 1964 on a grand scale befitting its noble traditions.

The Centenary Committee under the patronage of Dr S. Radhakrishnan, President of India and under the chairmanship of Dr C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar have formulated an ambitious scheme to commemorate the memory of the great Swamiji. It will cost about rupees ten lakhs to work out the entire scheme. Some items of the scheme such as a Girls' High School, installation of a statue of Swami Vivekananda, a well-equipped Library, Reading Room, Children's Corner and Auditorium, publication of the Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda in Tamil and Telugu, are of permanent nature which will render public utility services for many many years to come.

The Governments of India, Madras and Andhra Pradesh and some friends have very kindly paid liberal contributions which have enabled us almost to complete the major schemes but we shall still require about two lakhs of rupees to complete all the items and to hold the celebrations in a fitting manner.

We therefore appeal to all devotees and admirers of Swami Vivekananda to kindly contribute liberally and feel proud of being responsible for upholding the cause of service to humanity as envisaged by Swami Vivekananda.

Contributions, which are free from Income Tax, may kindly be remitted to Ramakrishna Mission, Swami Vivekananda Centenary, C/o. Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras-4 (India).

SWAMI SUDDHASATWANANDA,
Secretary,
Swami Vivekananda Centenary Celebration
Committee, Madras.

Date: 2-9-1963.

.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. L OCTOBER 1963 No. 6

PANCADAŚĪ

इयमात्मा परानन्दः परप्रेमास्पदं यतः । मा न भूवं हि भूयासमिति प्रेमात्मनीक्षते ॥ ८ ॥

Iyam, this *samvit* (consciousness); *ātma*, the Self; (*bhavitumarhati*, is fit to be). *Yataḥ*, because (it is); *para*, immeasurable, infinite; *premāspadam*, abode of love; *tataḥ*, therefore; *parānandaḥ*, of the nature of supreme bliss. *Hi*, because; *ātmani*, about oneself; *mā na bhūvam*, let me never be non-existent; (*kinca*, and); *bhūyāsam*, let me be ever existent; *iti* (ideas) of this type; *prema*, love; *īkṣyaté*, is seen.

8. This Consciousness is the Ātman itself.[1] And because it is the abode of infinite love, it is of the nature of supreme bliss.[2] Again, because about oneself one cherishes such ideas as, 'Let me never be non-existent', and, 'let me ever be', it follows that this Self is seen to be loved in the world.[3]

[1] We have seen in the foregoing verses that this Consciousness is existing at all times (*satya*) therefore eternal (*nitya*). It is also of the self-illuminating nature. It alone can therefore be the Atman, the Self. For anything other than the Atman is found to be not having these inherent natures.

[2] One that is of the nature of Supreme bliss can alone be infinitely lovable and that is the Atman, others are all but temporary affections.

[3] Even by experience of the world it can be proved that the Atman is the only thing that is beloved.

तत्प्रेमात्मार्थमन्यत्र नैवमन्यार्थमात्मनि । अतस्तत्परमं तेन परमानन्दताऽऽत्मनः ॥ ९ ॥

Anyatra, in objects other than the Self; *tat*, that; *prema*, love; *ātmārtham*, for the sake of the Self. *Evam*, similarly; *ātmani*, love of oneself; *anyārtham*, for the sake of others; *na*, is not. *Ataḥ*, hence; *tat*, that love; *paramam* (is) supreme; (and) *tena*, by that; *ātmanaḥ*, of the Atman; *paramānandatā*, the supreme bliss, (*siddhambhavati*, is proved).

9. The love that is felt towards other objects[1] is for the sake of the Atman.[2] Similarly, however, the love of the Atman is not for the sake of others.[3] Therefore that love of the Atman is the highest and by this is proved that the Atman is supremely blissful.[4]

[1] Other objects of love in the world are son, wife, wealth, possessions, etc.

[2] In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (IV. v. 6) Yājñavalkya's discourse with Maitreyi brings this meaning to us in a very impressive manner. न वा अरे पत्युः कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवति, आत्मनस्तु कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवति ॥ 'It is not for the sake of the husband, my dear, that the husband is loved, but for one's own sake that he is loved.' In this strain Yājñavalkya goes on to say that it is for the sake of the Ātman alone everything is dear.

[3] A doubt may arise: If everything is loved for the sake of the Ātman, can it not be that Ātman is also loved for the sake of anything else? To deny this it is reiterated here, that for the sake of nothing else but for its own sake the Ātman is loved. The Upaniṣad also says: 'This self is dearer than a son, dearer than wealth, dearer than everything else and is innermost.' (Br. Up. I. iv. 8)

[4] No one loves anything that is not blissful or which does not impart joy. From the above it is clear that in the Ātman alone can there be perfect and eternal bliss; hence the emphasis.

इत्थं सच्चित्परानंद आत्मा युक्त्या तथाविधम् । परं ब्रह्म तयोश्चैक्यं श्रुत्यंतेषूपदिश्यते ॥ १० ॥

Ittham, in the above said way; *yuktyā*, by reasoning; *ātmā*, the Self; *sat*, the ever existent; *cit*, self-luminous Consciousness; *parānandaḥ*, infinite bliss; (*niscitaḥ*, was conclusively established). *Param brahma ca*, the supreme Brahman also; *tatha vidham*, of that nature; (*bhavati*, is). *Tayoh*, between the two; *aikyam*, identity; *śrutyanteṣu*, in the end of the Srutis (i.e. in the Upaniṣads); *upadiśyaté*, is taught.

10. In the above said way, by reasoning[1] the Atman was conclusively established to be ever-existent, self-luminous Consciousness and infinite Bliss (sat-cit-ananda).[2] The Supreme Brahman also is of that nature. In the Vedanta or Upaniṣads which are the end of the Śruti, the identity between these two is taught.[3]

[1] In the third verse the eternity of Consciousness (or Knowledge) was stated and in the eighth verse Its identity with Ātman was proved. In the ninth verse its supreme blissfulness was evidenced. In this way by logic and experience in the world it was established that the Ātman was *Sat-Cit-Ānanda*.

[2] There are innumerable passages in the Śruti which relate the nature of the Brahman: *'Satyam jñānam anantam brahma'*, *'Vijñānam ānandam brahma'*, etc.

[3] The identity between Brahman and the Ātman is forcefully brought out in the passages such as: अयमात्मा ब्रह्म 'This Ātman is Brahman.' (Br. Up. IV. iv. 5)

अभाने न परं प्रेम भाने न विषये स्पृहा । अतो भानेऽप्यभाताऽसौ परमानंदतात्मनः ॥ ११ ॥

Abhāné, if not experienced; *paramaprema*, the Supreme love; *na*, (is) not. *Bhāné*, if experienced; *viṣayé*, in the worldly objects; *spṛhā*, desire; *na*, (is) not. *Ataḥ*, hence; *ātmanaḥ*, of the Atman; *asau*, the above said; *paramānandatā*, the highest bliss; *bhāné api*, though experienced; *abhātā*, (is) as good as inexperienced.

(*Continued on page 376*)

VALUE OF PRACTICE IN RELIGION

There was a time, and that not very distant, when religion was considered by some as the opium of the infirm, and the invalids. But that age has passed or is passing away. The materialistic science, which impinged this thought on the world, failed to propound an alternative principle which could give man eternal solace. It had to eat the humble pie and refrain from blowing its trumpets of triumph, when all it could offer in exchange came in the form of competition, strife and destruction. The two world wars have shown this and the Damocles' sword of the third war has frightened the supporters of materialism into silence. Besides, a greater awakening to the truths of Vedanta — which took up the challenge of science to religion boldly and proved that the content of true religion was sound and that it alone could lend support to life — has badly shaken the theories of scientists that they could do away with religion as of no import. The advent of the twin personalities, Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda, on to the stage of the world, and their illuminating lives have rejuvenated the faith of the doubters and imparted *śraddhā* even into the faithless. For they based their arguments not on words but on deeds. There was ocular evidence of spiritual vigour and attainments in their case and an earnest seeker who went to them obtained something tangible, something solid, in the form of spirituality. There was little speculation in their teaching. It was all here and now. Everything was definite about God, without being dogmatic. This can be, without any hesitation, said to be the turning point in the history of the world, though it may still take time before it is acknowledged or fully realized. But acknowledged or not, there is clearly written in bold letters, as it were, that the scientific methods of Vedanta had completely upset the apple-cart of the material scientists.

How was Vedanta able to do it? In India, by religion was meant something which was practical. It was not an aid to either politics or social developments nor a curio meant for decoration, as it happens to be in some other parts of the world. In India religion was for its own sake, therefore the ancients were bent upon making it most practicable, livable. There is not a principle in Vedanta which could not be put into practice. Vedanta is not only a speculation but also a practice and a realization. It is not from the erudition in the presentation of the philosophy that the eminence of a person is judged, but how far he had been able to put that philosophy into practice. Sri Ramakrishna's words in this regard are final and bring out the importance practice bears to our soul's well-being. He says : 'I consider a pundit (scholar) without any asset of *sādhana* (practice) to his credit as mere straw. Such pundits are like vultures that soar high in the sky when all the while their eyes are fixed on the charnel pit below.' How true it is! Unless one practises spiritual disciplines the longing for the things of the world do not abate in the least. It is being proved everyday by science that one has to go beyond the gravitational pull before one can manoeuvre freely, with safety, in space. So too, unless the pull, the drag of the world is nullified it is impossible to rise beyond the worldly attractions. What an amount of power they put in the rocket that fires a ship into space! Once in there, however, the occupant is safe and can at will come down. That is exactly what the science of religion professes to teach : To rise beyond the gravitation of the worldly desires. But the power is to be built by oneself. No one can do it by proxy, though everyone would have liked to benefit if such were the case.

Practice : The Sign of Earnestness

There is a sequence of events, rather a succession of actions that settle, that signify whether a man is earnest about religion or not. He may profess vehemently but unless he practises spiritual disciplines, in India at least, he is not believed to be of any consequence as a religious person. Neither can he hoodwink people for all time, though some may be duped for sometime. Like the counterfeit coin he gets caught when observed at close quarters. So practice is a necessary limb of religion. Take even the ordinary arts like music or painting: What pains does not one take to play on a single musical instrument, be though it may, even to a moderate success; what labour does not one put in to culture one's voice in singing or to become even a third rate painter? How many years does one not spend in these pursuits! Does one consider it a waste? There is an earnestness in such people, so no effort seems too much for them. Why then should not religion which reveals the inner beauty of the soul not attract as much attention; make us as much earnest? Swamiji picturesquely brings this out: 'What an amount of attention does business require, and what a rigorous taskmaster it is! Even if the father, the mother, the wife or the child dies, business cannot stop! Even if the heart is breaking we still have to go to our place of business, when every hour of work is a pang. That is business, and we think it is just, that it is right.' Have we at least this much of application to religion? Swamiji says, 'This science calls for more application than any business can ever require.' Unless earnestness gets hold of you, you will not practise. And earnestness comes when religion is sought for its own sake, and not as a means to something else.

The purport of religion is one thing, and one thing alone, that is realization of God, liberation from this round of births and deaths, 'being and becoming' as Swami Vivekananda aptly describes it. And every true religion emphasizes this. Christ said, 'If thou will be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.'[1] He did not stop with that. He continued: 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.'[2] The Upaniṣads say, 'Not by action, nor by progeny or wealth but by renunciation alone immortality was reached by some.'[3] 'Establish your mind in Me alone and in Me alone merge your intellect. And then, after the fall of the body, you will, without doubt, live in Me alone,'[4] says Sri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gītā. Thus every prophet has vouched to the fact that religion means practice of renunciation and culture of other good virtues. And practice alone testifies to earnestness. Wheresoever there is non-compliance of this fundamental principle there can be no true religion, however much it may be lauded, however much it may be of utilitarian value. In short, there cannot be a comfortable religion, if we can but properly assess the ideas contained in the quotations cited above.

Religion is not in frothy words

Having defined what religion is, we like to point out what it is not. For more often than not the wrong is taken to be the right and *vice versa*. It has been a practice with some to condemn, vilify and downgrade other sects and other religions, so much so that it has become their second nature. They cannot glorify their religion without condemning others. But is this necessary? We think not. If one's religion is good and great it must be able to convert one into the image of God whom one worships. If not, it is simply lip service they are offering to religion. They are interested in argumentation and fights and not in bringing religion into themselves. Swami Vivekananda rightly points out: 'The very fact of these disputations and fightings among sects shows that they do not know anything about religion. Religion to them is a mere mass of frothy words, to be written in books. ... They fight and talk about religion, and do not want it.' When we leave off all these vain talks and seek God alone then we are on the path. For 'This Atman cannot be attained by the study of the Vedas, nor by intellect, nor even by much learning. By him alone it is attained whom It chooses — to him Atman reveals Itself in Its real form,'[5] says the *Upaniṣad*.

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[1] Gospel of St. Mathew, 19. 21.

[2] *Ibid.*, 19. 24.

[3] न कर्मणा न प्रजया धनेन त्यागेनैके अमृतत्वमानशुः।
—*Kaivalyopanishad*, 1. 3.

[4] मय्येव मन आधत्स्व मयि बुद्धिं निवेशय ।
निवसिष्यसि मय्येव अथ ऊर्ध्वं न संशयः ॥
—*Gita*, 12. 8.

Purpose of Practice

As we have said, religion proposes to make man realize his own nature, which is divinity, perfection. It makes us kindle the flame of infinite knowledge; a light that dispels all darkness once and for all time. But it cannot be done in a day. There are so many things that have covered the lamp of our Atman, so many obstacles and encrustations in the form of attachments. These are to be removed and then only can we reach the lamp. We know that the mind is the seat of all attachment and aversions, in fact of all that man is. It is the storehouse of all previous impressions and repositary of all knowledge too. Every thought man thinks, every action he does leaves an impress on the mind and the sum total of these go to form his character. Impelled by the previous *samskāras* an ordinary man acts. It is the purpose of practice to overcome the vicious tendencies that have gathered in the mind, to purify it. This can be done by creating new and good possibilities. 'The evil tendencies are to be counteracted by good ones,' says Patanjali in his *Yoga Sutras*. To think good thoughts and do good actions and check the mind from swerving away from the righteous path is practice. But it is a difficult task. Sri Krishna exhorts in the *Gita*, 'Undoubtedly, O mighty-armed one, the mind is of a fickle nature and cannot be easily controlled, but O son of Kunti, by practice and renunciation it can be subdued.'[6]

Practice is a struggle no doubt but through struggle alone everything grows. For our very existence we have to struggle. Much as we would like it, there is no alchemy by which man turns overnight into a saint. Sri Ramakrishna used to say that mere knowledge that there is fire in the firewood cannot cook the rice; one must light the fire and put the pot of rice on it, then only will it cook. Again he said: 'Merely uttering "hemp!" "hemp!" does not make one intoxicated. One must bring it, grind it and drink it and then only will one feel the intoxication.' Likewise, merely uttering 'religion', 'religion' does not make a man religious. Swamiji remarks: 'We want to strike the light in a second, but we forget that the making of the candle is the chief thing.' Without the candle where will you light the flame. And in making the candle is all the struggle; when once it is made the lighting takes but little time. Sri Ramakrishna compared this struggle to a boatman's rowing in the winding alleys of the river. The boatman has to struggle hard, no wind can help him there. But once he has gained the main current of the river, he hoists his sail finding a favourable wind, leans back and enjoys a smoke. It is smooth sailing from then on. He has only to hold the rudder slightly steady and the boat reaches the destination safely. This is the purpose of practice: not to get stuck up in the brambles and bushes, to steer clear of the sand dunes and avoid being swept into shallow waters and running aground. It is not a shot in the dark, not an unexpected chance that man is asked to take, by practising religious disciplines; the Yoga practices have scientifically demonstrated how man can rise in the ladder of spirituality with full awareness of his progress. You do certain practices and then attain certain perceivable results.

What to practise?

It now remains to be said what one must practise. Though there are many paths and various disciplines there are certain fundamentals which are common to all the paths. Taking the name of the Lord, prayer, meditation are some of them. But there are some preliminaries which help an aspirant in the practice of these. One of them, the most important one, is the desire for liberation, *mumukṣutvam*. It is also the primary condition of religious life. When this condition is fulfilled others follow as a matter of course. If there is no real yearning for liberation, religious life becomes dull and drab. On the other hand, the desire for liberation being present even the harshest of disciplines become enjoyable and their sharpness fails to cut into the mind. The malady with the world is that it sees the unreal as the real. Let us be clear here about this reality : By reality we mean that which exists at all times, nay in which even time exists. If this definition is firmly grasped there should be no scope for miscomprehension. No one, not even the Advaitist says that this world is an illusion as we comprehend an illusion to be. What he says has been twisted and tortured to make him look ridiculous. What he says is that the world is not real as God is. And this is the basis of all religious life : To discriminate between the real and the unreal. Even a bhakta has to concede that God alone is real, otherwise how could he abstain from being attached to the things of the world ?

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[5] नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनूँ स्वाम् । —*Kathopanishad*, 2. 23.

[6] असंशयं महावाहो मनो दुर्निग्रहं चलम् ।
अभ्यासेन तु कौन्तेय वैराग्येण च गृह्यते ॥
—*Gita*, 6. 35.

Real spiritual life begins when man discriminates between the real and the apparent and rejecting the apparent clings to the real. The next disciplines are control of the senses and the mind, forbearance and repose of the mind. With long practise of these disciplines man's mind becomes purified and in the purified mind God is reflected, says Sri Ramakrishna. Seeing God face to face and knowing Him intimately alone is religion said Sri Ramakrishna time and again. So practice too must lead us to this and if it does not, it is time that we reassessed the motive that is hidden in our mind. Yet it must be conceded that some attain success more easily than others. The reason may be that the intensity of the longing for God in one case is more than that of the others, for does not Swami Vivekananda say, 'What want is there without its object outside ?' When the want is intense it will be fulfilled. And this wanting will be expressed in the practice. That is the value of practice in religion. Finally, let us recall what Swamiji says about religion and practice : 'Religion is ever a practical science, and there never was nor will be any theological religion. It is practice first, and knowledge afterwards.'

PANCADAŚĪ

(*Continued from page* 372)

11. If the highest bliss is not experienced there cannot be supreme love.[1] If, on the other hand, that bliss is experienced there can be no desire for worldly enjoyments. Hence though the highest bliss is experienced it is as good as inexperienced (for the ordinary run of men).[2]

[1] For in the world one loves known and beautiful objects alone, so one has to know the object in order to love.

[2] One loves one's own Self, thus establishing that the Self is more than known. At the same time, however, one desires worldly objects too. But on this account we cannot say that the Ātman is not of the Supreme bliss. Hence it follows that though we know ourselves, we do not know It in the true perspective. Why it is so, will be discussed in the succeeding verses.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE BUILDING OF MODERN INDIA

(*Continued from the August issue*)

SWAMI SATSWARUPANANDA

In India the autocratic rule of monarchs and petty chiefs prevailed throughout history. As a result India's masses have grown a tendency to follow the behests of someone. Now that the kings and autocrats have been buried deep, the country is to search for new leadership. Economic leadership has passed away before it could grow roots. Mahatmaji tried to build a moral leadership with a few chosen men and women. With the Mahatma morality was buttressed by spirituality. With many of his chosen people the latter is an encumbrance. A people who would not learn the lesson history teaches it, is bound to suffer. Buddhism wanted to build society on morality alone and it vanished from the land, making Buddha himself a god. So a leadership based on spirituality, with morality as its handmaid, is to be built up to guide the society to progress and enlightenment. To build anything takes time, especially where the hangings-on of several centuries have created deep-rooted adverse psychological conditions.

Swamiji's programme, however, was clear and absolutely unambiguous. First of all, caste privileges must go. Let the dying die, the present caste system is dying. Let us have the generosity of allowing it to die in peace. For that no energy need be foolishly spent. Instead of howling, we must learn from the higher castes, if they would teach, what made them higher, viz. their spiritual and secular knowledge, their discipline and training. If they would not teach we would rather play the part of Ekalavya, and learn their superior traits through concentrated observation and devotion, than that of Shambuka and try to bring about a revolution and rift into our already divided society and dissipate its little energy. What is important is learning and incorporating in ourselves those intellectual, moral and spiritual qualities that have made them great and not quarrelling and converting them into enemies. Bringing education to the lower classes is the surest way of closing the differences.

The second point in the Swami's programme in reforming the ills of the present caste system is to raise the economic standard of the depressed classes by starting industries in the country. If we can do but these two, with no words of criticism escaping our lips, we can bring about a rapid social evolution which will be much more impressive in its content than many revolutions made glamorous by wordy propaganda. The Swami was, by no means, an advocate of classless society, which, according to him, was a Utopia with no practical counterpart in any society anywhere in any historical time ; but at the same time he admitted the desirability, even necessity of breaking the rigidity of the present Hindu society. And castes, as he found in the scriptures, had never a necessary connexion with the prohibitive injunctions about inter-dining and intermarriage and never should have ; though in overwhelming cases, he admitted dining and marriage and many other social intercourses would be restricted to limited communities and classes. If this rigidity does not go, the solidarity in small groups, in castes and classes, will bring about disruption in the larger social body as it has already done. The degree and extent of relaxation, in general and in special cases, should not however depend on arbitrary or whimsical actions of individuals but on a body of widely respected persons. Still, it is our view, the Swami was not in favour of driving the defaulters out of the Hindu fold altogether but finding some place for them within its fold in some other part of the country, where the broken prohibitions had the local sanction, or in some other stratum of the society at the same place. This is, he felt, the beauty and utility of a society with castes, its point of advantage over other societies having no castes. In them, if the only one standard of the society suits you, you are there; else you must quit it, part with your dear ones. A caste society, properly understood and guided, is not so cruel as that—you may live apart and may continue loving your dear relatives. The Western society allows individual freedom in most social matters, still the tie of love is snapped when a convention is transgressed; and the Catholic society is not actually so free as it seems to us because most of our contact was only with the Anglo-Saxon people. In cases of transgression the present Hindu society too does not allow social intercourse with former relatives. This has no sanction of scriptures but of local conventions of long standing, of a time when political and economic suppression had almost stifled the life of the society and there was no enlightened guiding body. Society, Eastern or Western, must have its laws, either by way of conventions or by scriptural sanction; and each law is a restriction on individual freedom. So free society is almost a myth. All prohibitions or sanctions are wholesome growths from within societies, made holy after a long currency by scriptures or conventions or legalized by an act of parliament. Classification or stratification into castes or classes have the same origin and history. As long as life flows free, there is no stagnation and therefore no stink. Social rules cannot make life flow, whose cause is to be sought elsewhere; they canalize it to a definite purpose.

In this connexion another point of great import should be touched. We would not dilate on this, for it has escaped criticism from the Western Indologists and their disciples in our country, mostly because it was not in vogue in the then, as well as the present society. We mean the *Āshrama Dharma*. According to the Hindu scriptures a member's life is to be divided into four stages or periods, viz., those of a student, a householder, an anchorite and a perfected soul. Now as then, is to be found the second stage only, with a vague shadow of the first. The Swami wanted to revive it; rather introduce, a modern version of it. And he laid the greatest emphasis on the first stage, the Brahmacharya. According to him, if the first is properly taken care of, the rest are bound to follow suit.

We are glad to see it in the offing. There is almost a rage for residential educational institutions. What is needed is the qualified āchāryas, who are, however, nowhere to be found. Without crying for the moon let us be satisfied with the moon in the mirror, hoping that the students thus trained in these gurukulas would themselves be the ideal āchāryas. With the introduction of the multipurpose type of education in the residential schools the picture is complete, except for the lack of trained and 'realized' gurus. Products of these institutions will be good and efficient householders, knowing their jobs very well and retiring from them in proper time to yield place to new ones. The laws of retirement in government and other services will help in creating the third stage (of an anchorite). The fourth is bound to come when the other stages are scrupulously followed. So much for the Swami's opinion about the *Varṇāshrama dharma.*

III

Now we turn to his solution of the problem of the Indian masses. He found the core of the Indian masses very sound, almost *non-pareil*. They were gentle and hard-working, honest and God-fearing, ever ready to share with others or sacrifice the little they had for any noble cause. Compared to the masses of other countries, who were highly inflammable and violent, the Indian counterparts appeared to him to be gods incarnated on earth. He found that the adverse remarks of the Western critics against these masses were true as facts, but were not based on a true analysis and therefore radically wrong. Yes, the masses were dirty as dirt can be; behaved as cowards before the masters; would pocket the grossest of insults without turning rebellious; had no urge to know anything of the world; would not adopt methods, when told or shown, to better their condition; were too easily satisfied with what honest but antedeluvian methods of their ancestors would bring them; would spend their idle evening hours in singing devotional choruses, rather than in engaging themselves in some profitable small industries; would live in squalor in small rooms with cattle—in short, had no idea of a better life, far less a desire for one. Hopelessness made them resign themselves to their present lot. Generations of unfed brain and body reduced them to their room-mates, the gentle Indian cows. All these were facts undeniable but cruel, for which they were not to be blamed. They did wrong themselves, they were wronged against, and that grievously and for long.

Swami Vivekananda's analysis of the situation revealed to him two factors. One led him to its cause, which he found to be the tyranny of the upper classes, who, themselves tyrannized over by the alien rulers for centuries, found an unholy joy in heaping disabilities of all sorts on the masses. Remove the cause and the effect is gone. The other factor gave him hope for their regeneration. The Swami found to his infinite joy that although the brain and the body of the masses were starved, not so their heart, which was sound and full of the milk of human kindness. Touch their heart and they wake up with the strength and roar of a lion. Education, secular and spiritual, must be brought to their doors, and must be imparted through their heart. In them emotions ring true. So the start must be from there. Emotions, properly handled, will make them active and alive to what is going on around them, which in turn will fill their brain with all necessary information that would have had a call from within. Thus armed with the method for the regeneration of the masses the Swami looked around to find out the teachers and he found a desert where he expected to see a greenery. The rich, the nobility, the educated were all heartless. Pampered by the toil of the tillers and labourers they were averse to do anything to improve the conditions of the latter, lest they should lose the source of their income. The brainy educated applauded the Swami but would not work for the masses, for it was too low and humdrum for the highbrows to be so engaged. The Swami's call however did not go unanswered. The young lads, the students' community responded, but not generously. With these few the Ramakrishna Mission was started to train the teachers for the uplift of the masses and through them the nation as a whole.

How did the Swami want to regenerate the masses? By giving them what he called true education. By 'true education' he meant that type of education which makes man a man, in other words, which builds his character; and character, according to him, is the 'nervous association of ideas' and moral principles, which makes it impossible for the possessor to deviate from them even if he wills. Self-respect, faith in oneself, that one can do anything one likes, that one has the capacity for infinite progress in all directions if one but applies one's will and patience to it —is what one needs to culture and acquire; this is the very basis of development of personality.

This cannot be done by learning all the arts and sciences, all philosophies and technology that the advanced nations of the world or India's own old knowledge can teach. Character is built by seeing and associating oneself with a character and obeying him implicitly but not blindly. Character is the result of sustained determined efforts, for long years, to reach perfection, and this urge for effort everyone feels within himself. Reverence for a man of character, pouring out of one's personality at his feet, is the best, surest, and shortest method. The next best, but the heroic, method is the arduous one of self-discipline, of doing it alone; but (here also) it should be buttered with reverential devotion to God. The spirit of reverence is almost the whole of it; cynicism is its negation. Devotion, however, is not idleness but concentrated activity at the behest and guidance of a competent character. It is a most intimate relation between two noble souls, an identification of one with the other personality.

Can the masses be trained to this character? It can be. But supposing it is not possible, can a nation, especially the Indian people without this character, be of any value to humanity? Swami Vivekananda loved India dearly. But those who have read the Swami between the lines would have no hesitation to say that he would not like India to live if not as a dedication to humanity. There is no meaning for India to live if the Indian masses have no character. Hence India's masses, whether they will it or no, must have this character and Indian educationists must see to this. There is a distinction between an *Upādhyāya* and an Āchārya. An *Upādhyāya* is one who teaches one or more branches of learning; an Āchārya is one who lives the highest truth, over and above possessing an all-round knowledge with specialization in one branch. Our masses, why, any section of Indians, cannot hope to get both these classes of teachers for some decades to come. That, however, should not deter us from procuring the best available materials as our teachers, trying collectively all the while to hasten the realization of this ideal. The Swami said, if we are to engage one teacher for a Brahmin boy engage ten teachers for a Pariah boy, for, the Brahmin boy has a *samskāra* whereas the Pariah boy has not. So the best available teachers are to be requisitioned for giving the kind of education that will build the character of our masses and give food to their body and brain.

To build character, the Swami holds, tradition or proper understanding of and reverence for it is of supreme value. To do that, the Swami wanted the teachers to know all the wonderful stories of the Upaniṣads, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata* and the Puraṇas, so that they may recite them regularly to the students and by example and exhortation encourage them to emulate those heroes and heroines. Stories from the histories of Rājasthanis, Sikhs and Mahrattas were equally good. Teachers must put warmth and fervour into them. If the recital is lifeless it will not produce any effect on the audience. The touch of the teachers' heart will make them glow brightly. The few good qualities that are still there in our masses are mostly due to these recitals by our *Kathaka* pundits, who, even today, command audiences, throughout the country, which few political leaders can hope to do. It is because they put their hearts into it, over and above the fact that they have carried this art of recital to perfection. This is what the teachers of our masses must learn in order to be effective character-builders of the nation.

This character-building programme must be made supreme in all our mass education schemes. But this alone will not raise our masses to the desired level. The Swami, who never got tired of paraphrasing the famous Upaniṣadic passage, that by renunciation alone one can get salvation, went so far in his sympathy for the Indian masses as to denounce the rishis and say that they had no business to preach renunciation to the hungry masses. Whether the rishis actually preached renunciation to all and sundry can be questioned. We are, however, drawing the attention of the nation-builders to this fact that the Swami went all out in giving fullest enjoyment to the masses. Without enjoyment renunciation, which is the goal of noble human life, cannot come. Famished people must be fed first, then you can talk to them of noble things. This holds good not only in the physical sphere but in the moral domain also. So new fields for earning must be opened for the masses. Industries alone can do that. For opening up of industries as well as for manning them our educational systems must make due provision. Mere academic education—logic-chopping and philosophizing—will not do. Education must be oriented towards *nihśreyas* and *abhyudaya*, as of old, i.e., not merely directed to attain salvation but also, perhaps more so, to enjoyment — enjoyment not of a brute but of a pure and vigorous human being. This is the end of education.

to make man pure and vigorous, noble and tremendously active. We cannot afford to lose sight of the prefix 'abhi' in 'abhyudaya' which gives us a direction to our activities and enjoyments, viz., towards the Lord who is living in and moving every creature. Yes, enjoy by all means but never forget that you are a human being, the only one among creatures who have searched and found the Lord of the universe.

Indians lost their freedom and remained slaves for about one thousand years. The main cause was their insularism. They limited themselves within the geographical bounds of their country to such an extent that they did not know what was happening just on the other side of the Himalayan passes. Nay, they were ignorant of the topography of their own country — Bappa was trapped by the Muslim invaders in his own country. This insularism, this inordinate ancient pride in one's own culture and the consequent hatred or abhorrence for all others, is the principal cause of the old India's downfall. History should not be allowed to repeat. Indian masses must know what other nations and countries are like, what they are doing. Our education must supply all the information. We must be conversant with their knowledge, energy, and activities, their life and ideal. Their history, geography, arts, sciences, technology, philosophy we must learn thoroughly in order to be abreast of them; and a comparative study of these and our Indian knowledge in all its branches must be instituted in our higher educational programme and the results must be made known to the masses through popular media. Through broad-based education all superstition, narrowness, misconception should be driven out of the land. Modern Indians must be as broad and brave as their Vedic ancestors, who never quailed before the discovery of new facts and principles, however unpleasant they might have been, and who were ever ready to adjust their lives to the new discoveries or inventions. All these cannot be done through text books or in schools and colleges. Our social welfare department must train modern *kathakas* after the pattern of those of old, but must be better equipped mentally as well as materially, i.e. with maps, charts, apparatuses and instruments. Inasmuch as their duties are very important these *kathakas* must be recruited from the bright products of our universities and should be given proper training to bring even abstruse things to the common man. It is by talks, recitals, radio and social programmes that the minds of our masses should be broadened.

But in making the mass-minds broad to the desired degree we should guard against making them shallow. This is not a theoretical danger but one which has already overtaken our university products. To avoid this real danger is to avoid dumping information in them. Information must be supplied, but along with supply demand must be created. The masses must be taught to think and find out things for themselves. And the urge to think cannot come unless observation is keen; that is, the use of our sense organs must be cultivated. Our eyes must be penetrative, ears made to catch shades of sound vibrations. Those who have made a comparative study of an illiterate village boy and a college boy in a town would have noticed that the former's power of observation is much keener than the latter's. It seems our present educational system kills our power of observation, through its over-emphasis on ready-made things. This is not due to defects of the sense organs, for eyes must photograph, tympanum must vibrate to sounds. What is lacking is attention. So our educational schemes must see that we develop concentration of mind. When the subject of study happens to be interesting or amusing concentration comes of itself; but when it is not so then our energy and patience are taxed, we try to give up the task. It is exactly this that we want to prevent. In order to force the fickle mind to remain buried in an uninteresting topic, to drive away boredom and to keep up the steady flow of energy towards it requires training; and this is what is lacking in all our current educational systems — there is no conscious attempt anywhere to develop the mind as such. Meditation is the method to develop our minds integrally. We need not jump at the mention of the word which smacks of religion. Christians, Muslims and Hindus — all want religion. Let them have it and learn culturing their minds and hearts together by meditating on the noblest of all concepts, God. But meditation cannot be practised during busy hours or in distraction, though a mind, developed by the process, can concentrate at any time on any matter. In fact training of the mind or heart or sense organs cannot be undertaken, especially in a hot climate, when the sun is blazing or the worldly business has started. Calm and cool hours of the night and the starlights are required for this. Our educational institutions open and close during the trying hours. To have the trainees during the proper hours and in proper mood these schools and colleges should be residential; and the teachers must not forget this primary purpose of these institutions. The students' first duty after the morning wash should be meditation followed by prayer and devotional songs, i.e. practice of concentration followed by that of the expansion and orientation of the heart or emotions.

So we find three important factors in the Swamiji's scheme for the uplift of the masses: (i) proper type of national education, (ii) improvement of their economic condition, and (iii) removal of their social disabilities. But all these should be done with the definite and determined view of making them angels of peace and prosperity. But peace, according to the Swami, never meant the adoption of peaceful method under all circumstances. Adopt peaceful means in your dealings with those who understand peace but give ten blows for one to those brutes who would not understand the peaceful means — this seems to be his considered view. He has warned us against committing the mistake of Ashoka which cost us our political freedom and emasculated the nation. The effect of Ashoka's peace propaganda went so deep into the nation's heart that again and again did the nation fall into stupor after some dazzling shows of valour, as by the Rajputs, Sikhs, Mahrattas, and others. There seems to be an unholy alliance between peace and stupor, which the nation, especially the nation-builders, would do well to remember and guard against.

IV

The Swami's next solicitude was for the Indian women of all ranks, who appeared to him to be veritable goddesses, only reduced to the states of slaves or even automata by a foolish and arrogant society. Like the equally oppressed masses, they too have retained their divinity in the depth of their beings under most trying circumstances. The Swami was equally impatient in ameliorating their condition. In the case of women the causes of their degradation were the same as those of the masses which can be summed up in one word — social tyranny; but the reasons or motives were different, all stemming from man's undue solicitation for keeping them pure and holy in order to preserve the purity of the race and family. In a society, patriarchal or matriarchal, the purity of the race undoubtedly depends on the purity of women. Where the society erred, however, is in thinking that purity can be maintained by raising a wall. They thought that was the only or at least the most effective protection. Again and again this theory has been exploded in all walks of life, but again and again has it been resolutely resorted to. The Swami, here again, found the solution in imparting the proper type of education. He actually saw the failure of the protective method. Innumerable restrictions drove the disease in, which in its turn expressed itself in many other diseases. For preserving purity child marriage was introduced; widows were hedged round; education was made a taboo, lest it opened their eyes and the restrictions be broken. The result of this extreme unnatural precaution was the creation of various complexes in women's minds and weakening of their bodies, thus deteriorating the vigour of the nation.

(To be continued)

PRASTHANA TRAYA AND ITS BACKGROUND

(*Continued from the July issue*)

SWAMI VIMALANANDA

The *Āraṇyakas* are so called because they are studied in the forest. As Vānaprasthas, the great Yajñiks, it is supposed, retired to the neighbouring lonely spots or jungles and spent their time in mental worship and contemplation. The literature that helped and grew round this stage of life is called *Āraṇyakas*. Some of the Upaniṣads form part of it.

We have seen that the root *bṛh* has given terms like *brahma* etc. The same also has given the term *bṛhat* which also means sometimes mantra. The term *Bṛhaspati* denotes the Lord of the mantras, similar to *Brahman*.

Another interesting word which should be understood in this connection is *ātman* which was in the Rig Veda without the *ā*, originally meaning the central part of the body (chest) and first person, sometimes in the later language denoting the reflexive self (I, myself), philosophically the spirit in man and metaphysically the universal spirit identified with Brahman. The last significance of the word is met with only in the Upaniṣads and Atharva Veda very clearly. The words *ātmā* and *prāṇa* are often interchanged.

The word *Upaniṣad* is analyzed as *upa*+*ni*+*sad*. Western scholars derive it as *upa* near, *ni* down and *sad* to sit, meaning knowledge imparted in a secret session to the intimate disciple. In the beginning of the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* Bhāṣya Śri Śankarāchārya explains that the word *Upaniṣad* means knowledge or *Vidyā*, or the goal of the teachings of the Upaniṣad. According to him the root *sad* has three applications here in all the three meanings of the root. *Sad* means to approach, to destroy and to scatter. There are people who intensely desire liberation from *samsāra*. They become free from desires and cravings for the pleasures of this life and heaven. Then they take to the Upaniṣads as a means to achieve their end. As taught by the teachers they completely devote themselves to the study and meditation of the Upaniṣads. Consequently the seed of their *samsāra* is destroyed. All these ideas are pregnant in the term. *Upasad*, *niṣad*, and *sad* imply these meanings according to Śri Śankarāchārya. In the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* Bhāṣya preface Śankarāchārya again says *Upaniṣad* means the knowledge that gives liberation *upaniṣaditi vidyocyaté*. Those who study this Vidyā are able to destroy birth, death, old age and other evils. This knowledge takes to Brahman. *Mokṣa* rests on it. So this is *Upaniṣad*. The dialogues called Upaniṣad are meant to give this *Vidyā*. In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* itself there is a passage which beautifully gives a peep into the sense of the word Upaniṣad. ' When one is becoming strong, he becomes a rising man. Rising he becomes an attendant. Attending he becomes attached as a pupil (*upasatta*). Attached as a pupil he becomes a seer, he becomes a hearer, he becomes a thinker, he becomes a perceiver, he becomes a doer, he becomes an understander ' (Ch. 7-8-1). That is to say when a man becomes physically and mentally strong he becomes active and stands up for all necessary work. Then he goes near the Guru and attends on him and watches carefully the words and deeds of the Guru ; listens to what he says ; sees his life ; meditates upon what he has heard from the teacher ; acts accordingly and becomes a jñāni. This explains the idea of *upasatti* which is similar to the idea of Upaniṣads.

The Scheme and Content of the Upaniṣad Śruti

Śri Śankarāchārya makes the following observation : पद वाक्यप्रमाणज्ञो हि सम्यक् शास्त्रार्थं अध्यवसितुं शक्नोति । That is to say, only one who has a sound knowledge of *pada, vākya* and *pramāṇa* (significance of words, their logical and grammatical connection and the principles of evidence) can settle the meaning of the Śāstras conclusively. These competent persons who have thoroughly learnt and realized the truth of the Śruti generally classify the Vedic lore into three main categories according to their subject matter. The whole Śruti is composed of sentences or *vākyas* consisting of one or more words or *padas*. The first duty of a learner is to pick out the sentence unit and to understand their import through a knowledge of the correct significance of each word in the context. Later on the sentences will have to be used as a means of correct and valid knowledge that will help him for the achievement of *puruṣārtha* or desired values such as merit or virtue, wealth, pleasure and liberation (*dharma, artha, kāma* and *mokṣa*).

We have seen that the major portion of the Veda has been used and interpreted as *kriyāpara*. All those sentences that are found in any part of the Veda — the Upaniṣads too contain many of them — are called *codaka vākya* or mandatory sentences which ask a man to do certain things if he wishes to have certain benefits and advantages. A man who has desire, fitness and necessary means, naturally takes to the required activity as soon as he comes to know about the means by which he can achieve the desire. The *codaka vākyas* therefore concern themselves with persons who are ridden with desires and ambitions. Things desired are innumerable. Desire again has a positive and negative side. Certain things are desired to be acquired; certain others are desired to be got rid of. The first is *anukūla codanā* and the second *pratiṣedha codanā*. Again the *codanā* may be directed towards things that give satisfaction in this life or in the heaven. Or it may be directed towards qualities that are to be produced in oneself for one's own happiness. This second type of *codanā* is supposed to be of a higher level because they serve spiritual ends more than the rest. In the first case the candidate is induced to do certain things in order that he might possess pleasurable things on this earth or in heaven and in the second case the aspirant is commanded to practise and acquire inner virtues or *ātmaguṇas* such as self-control, concentration of thought, righteous behaviour and the like. The term *ācāra* and *śīla* denote religious practices performed and moral qualities practised according to the mandate of the Vedas.

Though the *codaka vākyas* are many and varied they are frequently preceded and or succeeded by a good many sentences which do not form a class by themselves, but are servile to the *codaka vākyas*. They are called *artha vāda,* meaning declaration made with a special motive. The motive always is to reinforce the mandatory sentence or to create in the mind of its reader a desire to seek or avoid certain things. Taken in themselves they look absurd or nonsensical. But when remembered that they are subsidiary to some *codanā* in the neighbourhood, they put on great significance and meaning. For example, a statement like 'the sacrificial pillar is the sun' is nonsense when taken separately. But in a context where the necessity of a sacrificial pillar and its description in connection with a yajña is given, the meaning clearly stands out that the pillar must be polished well and should shine like the sun. Exaggeration, idealization and uncommon expression are common in language when the speaker wants to be emphatic or dramatic. But the *arthavādas* never have an independent value; they are always there to subserve a *vidhi* or *codanā*. The Upaniṣads contain many *artha vāda* passages in the form of stories, allegories, anecdotes, poetic descriptions etc. The purāṇas are the inexhaustible mine where one may search for a wealth of *arthavādas*. *Codanā* is significant in two ways mainly as a motivatory force for external achievements or purely mental activities. The former requires external instruments and ingredients and will add to one's tangible possessions. Whereas the latter, *upāsanā* or pure mental activity is for the purpose of establishing Bhakti and *śīla*, that is to say, concentration of thought upon an object of worship and the acquisition of traits of conduct and character helpful to that. These two aspects are called *bahiranga sādhana* and *antaranga sādhana*. External work such as yajña and the like are helpful only in so far as they make one active and energetic, skilled in the performance of actions, concentrated in thought and effort, and pure in outlook when they are performed without craving for personal enjoyment. When they are done with the proper spirit, they may impress upon one the futility of all enjoyments and make one more indrawn. At this stage *antaranga sādhana* consisting of meditation, careful practise of moral virtue and similar other traits contributing to the increase of *ātmabhāva* operate and the aspirant becomes fit for the highest knowledge and realization. Man is prompted to progress in the path of religion at the early stages specially because of this *codanā* or *vidhi* often interpreted as the command of God or the belief that a conduct sanctioned by the scripture or the words of God alone can make a person fit for receiving the grace of God.

Vedanta or Upaniṣad vākyas explained from the setting of Dvaita and Viśiṣṭādvaita do not make the distinction between *bodhaka vākya* and *jñāpaka vākya* particularly significant. According to the *sampradāyas* just mentioned both have only more or less informative value and even when the latter is distinguished from the former they do not convey the same sense as the Advaitic interpretation does. According to the Advaitic interpretation *jñāpaka vākyas* are extremely few and are of the greatest importance and they form the quintessential core of the whole Śruti. They are also called, especially in reference to a few of them, Mahāvākyas or major sentences as distinguished from the rest called *avāntara vākyas* or minor statements. These Mahāvākyas do not create or convey any new information as generally understood. They are only reminders to recognize an already existing fact. Their value is to recognize a fact that is not in the foreground of one's consciousness, but at the same time it is already there. Just as a person wearing a necklace, searches for it outside, ignorant of the fact that it is on his neck, is reminded by another person, so also the Mahāvākyas serve to realize a forgotten fact.

The Bodhaka Vākyas form a large portion of the Upaniṣads. These sentences educate a man in the facts of religion and philosophy imparting knowledge about the seeking man himself, the universe in which he is placed, the reality behind them and the relations which exist between these. To survey in some detail the information gained from the Upaniṣads by a study of the *bodhaka vākyas* may be classified under the following heads: The Central theme of the Upaniṣads, called also as the Vedanta, is Reality covering not merely what is perceived by the senses but also what is beyond. It must be specially noted here the term Reality is used by many modern writers on philosophy to denote only aspects of existence which are real to the senses of man, and which may be experienced and studied by him. The Reality taught in the Śruti is quite different and is significantly called *sat* or *ekam sat* of which the visible reality of the senses is only an apparent fraction.

In exploring the Upaniṣads we have first of all to adopt an intelligent classification of Reality in different grades distinguishable from different characterizations. First the Śruti describes as the highest the *parabrahma* or *śuddhabrahma* (as it was later designated) the one principle called *ekam sat* which is *avāng manasa gocara*. That is to say, thought and mind cannot reach the Truth and it can be guessed only by the process of *atadvyāvṛtti* (elimination) as *aśeṣa, niṣedha, śeṣāvadhi*. The same is described as *nirviśeṣa advitīya brahma* or *advaitabhūma* and various other negative epithets. In the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* we get an anecdote of a conversation between Bastikala and Bahwa where the instructor teaches about Brahman by remaining silent. This indescribable transcendent attributeless Reality of which nothing can be said except that it exists is described at the second level as *apara brahma* or अत्यन्त परिपूर्ण एक वस्तु, चराचर विश्वरूप। and even as सगुण, सविग्रह, सप्रपञ्च, सविशेष ब्रह्म which is the goal of religions and the cause of the universe. For the purpose of the Highest Reality being made known to man, It has to be conceived of as the cause of the universe. Man can think of anything only in relation with his mind. Brahman in Itself being beyond thought and expression, can be known, if it is called knowing, only through the realization of Identity as ब्राह्मी भाव, ब्रह्मात्मैकत्व बोध, ब्रह्मात्मैकत्व विज्ञान, परमात्म तत्त्वबोध, अपरोक्षानुभव and the like. But at the second level when the same is conceived as अनेकगुण विभूति विशिष्ट: परमेश्वर: man can get some objective knowledge through some of the facets of that Reality. He is the Supreme God called Īśwara, Maheśwara, Sarvalokamaheśwara with whom we have intimate relation. At the third level he is described as सर्वजगदन्तर्यामि, सर्वजगत्सृष्टा पालक संहर्ता, सर्वप्रेरक, ज्ञानप्रदायक, अध्यात्मभाव प्रचोदक etc. All these various attributes are described variously in different Upaniṣads and a discriminative classified study of them will be helpful for spiritual purposes. At the fourth level we find the same Reality becomes माया प्रकृति शक्तिविशिष्ट: परमेश्वर: who evolves himself into this universe. According to Advaita, the Reality is now *prapanca vivarta adhiṣṭhāna.* At the fifth level we get the variegated universe of *bhūta bhoutika sṛṣṭhi* consisting of jīvas endowed with *kartṛtva* and *bhoktṛtva* and the universe supplying *bhogya, bhogasthāna* and *bhogopakaraṇa* for these jīvas.

Next the Upaniṣads describe at great length the jīva with his three bodies, three states, five sheaths, three destinies and *triputi* etc. The manifestation or creation of the universe and the evolution of the jīva are stated in many passages. The Upaniṣads are not a body of speculations resulting from stark curiosity or accidental wonder. They are the result of deep insight and intuition that have dawned in the wake of man's search of ways and means of getting beyond the limitations of ignorance and bondage and misery. So *mokṣopadesaparavākyas* form a significant part. There is detailed instruction about *brahmavidya sādhanas* or qualifications that are to be acquired for the purpose. Besides what we have described till now, miscellaneous subjects such as the lives of teachers who imparted the knowledge, the methods and illustrations of instructions and the like are also described off and on. Thus we find that the main problems dealt with in the Upaniṣads are ontological, cosmological, psychological, ethical and eschatological, if we view them from the modern philosophical way of classification. In the study of the Upaniṣads it would be highly rewarding if one exhaustively explores and combs out passages, sentences and expressions which naturally can be pigeonholed into any of these classes. When the Upaniṣads are studied in several revisions with this plan one will be able to get some command of the sources from which all religion and philosophy have flowed.

(*Concluded*)

The Aryan first began with the soul. His ideas of God were hazy, indistinguishable, not very clear; but as his idea of the human soul began to be clearer, his idea of God began to be clearer in the same proportion. So the inquiry in the Vedas was always through the soul. All the knowledge the Aryans got of God was through the human soul; and, as such, the peculiar stamp that has been left upon their whole cycle of philosophy is that introspective search after Divinity.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

VACASPATI AND VIJNANA BHIKSU ON THE BHOKTṚBHAVA OF PURUṢA

ANIMA SEN-GUPTA

In this article I propose to consider critically the interpretations offered by Vācaspati Miśra and Vijñāna Bhikṣu in regard to the Bhoktṛbhāva of Puruṣa mentioned explicitly in the fourth argument of the seventeenth Kārika of the *Sāmkhya Kārikā* of Īśvarakṛṣṇa.

The philosophy of Sāmkhya is not merely a dualistic system : it is also a rationalistic and realistic metaphysics, because it mainly depends on logical analysis and argumentation at every step. Being an orthodox system, it believes in the authority of the Vedas. But it has not made any attempt to justify any of its views by appealing to the revealed texts.

The Sāmkhya arguments for the existence of puruṣa are based on Logic and Reason and they are quite in harmony with the dualistic and realistic position of the classical Sāmkhya.

Critics have expressed doubt about the applicability of the fourth argument to prove the existence of puruṣa. It is argued that if puruṣa is by nature neutral and indifferent to all worldly happenings, then how can we ascribe bhoktṛbhāva to puruṣa ? Both Vācaspati and Vijñāna Bhikṣu have tried to solve this riddle in a manner which will not be incompatible with the unaffected nature of puruṣa.

We should remember that the seventeenth kārikā has been employed by the author of the *Sāmkhya-kārikā* to prove only the existence of puruṣa and not its indifference and neutrality. This puruṣa is one that has been caught in the snare of prakṛti. It is a subject that reveals naturally any object that happens to be in its proximity. [This *viṣaya-sambandha*, however, does not prove that puruṣa is not indifferent. On the contrary it is admitted that consciousness as a revealing principle only (*Prakāśātmaka Caitanya*) cannot but be neutral]. Perception of the visible world is not possible in the case of pure matter : nor is it possible in the case of pure Spirit. It is only the seemingly unified category of Spirit and matter (*Jīva-puruṣa*) that can be the perceiver of the *Dṛśya* through modifications of the intellect.

Accordingly, to Vācaspati *bhoktṛbhāva* of such a *jīva-puruṣa* refers to its capacity of perceiving the world in a manner as if the latter has been imaged in its own *vṛttis*. In the *Tattvavaiśāradī*, Vācaspati has introduced his unique conception of *cicchāyā* with a view to explaining the *bhoga* or bondage of puruṣa. Whether this *cicchāyā* refers to a unique relation or to simple reflection of *cit* in *buddhi* has not been clearly indicated. For the purpose of this paper, we shall, however, be using the term '*cicchāyā*' to signify the reflection of consciousness in buddhi, although in practical life we do admit a distinction between *chāyā* and *pratibimba*. In the opinion of Vācaspati Miśra, due to *sannidhāna*, a reflection of consciousness is caught in the *buddhi* by virtue of which all *buddhi-vṛttis* get apparently changed into consciousness ; and this apparent change in the character of *vṛttis* gives rise to a sense of false identity between puruṣa and *buddhi*. It is on account of this feeling of false unity that the *buddhi-vṛttis* are understood by the *avivekī* puruṣa as parts and parcels of its own nature. It is this false appropriation that has been described as the *bhoktṛbhāva* of puruṣa.[1] Since the consciousness of puruṣa is the cause of manifestation of the modifications of *buddhi* in the waking state, it seems as if puruṣa is non-different from the intellect and there is only one principle, not two. This fact has been mentioned by Pañcaśikhāchārya in his famous sūtra *Ekameva darśanam, khyātireva darśanam*. Although *puruṣa-caitanya* is radically different from the intellect, the two are fused together intimately so as to give rise to a false sense of oneness which hides the real truth.

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[1] *Tattvavaisaradi*, Chapter 1-4.

While explaining *sannidhāna*, Vācaspati has said that this does not mean any form of spatial or temporal contact between puruṣa and *buddhi*. Rather it implies a special kind of capability or *yogyatā* on the part of puruṣa to enlighten the states and the processes of *buddhi*, as a result of which, in the state of ignorance, a false sense of ownership arises in the spirit. Hence the spirit appears as the *pramātā, bhoktā* etc.[2]

Vācaspati's view has been criticised by Vijñāna Bhikṣu on the ground that mere *cicchāyā* in *buddhi* is not potent enough to account for the world-sense of the real puruṣa. If *buddhi* is only intelligised by the single reflection of consciousness in it and there is not the double reflection of the buddhivṛttis in Spirit, then, truly speaking, there can only be a relation between the image of puruṣa and *buddhi* and not between *buddhi* and real puruṣa. In such circumstances, intelligised *buddhi* plays the part of both the revealer and the revealed and as such this theory commits the fallacy of accepting one and the same category as both *kartā* and *karma*. Further, if *yogyatā* is believed to constitute the nature of puruṣa, it will continue even in the state of emancipation and, therefore, puruṣa's experience will never come to an end. Consequently, emancipation will become meaningless. Hence, Vijnāna Bhikṣu gives us his theory of double reflection which explains the *bhoktṛbhāva* of *jīva-puruṣa* in a better manner. According to this view, *buddhi*, first of all, reflects the consciousness of puruṣa and becomes intelligised with the result that the inherent *ahamkāra* of *buddhi* is falsely appropriated by the self. After that, the modifications of the intelligised *buddhi* are reflected back in the spiritual principle so as to reveal the objects (the forms of which have been caught in the *buddhi* states) as objects of enjoyment of an experiencing person. Here an intimate relation is established between *buddhi* and real puruṣa through reflection of *buddhi-vṛttis* in the self.

Just as the eye receives colour only and not any other quality, in the same manner, puruṣa receives in itself only the reflection of the modifications of *buddhi*. Real enjoyment in the forms of various psychological changes caused by actual spatio-temporal contact of the intellect with various worldly objects belongs to the intellect and not to the real self. It is the intellect that can be changed into the form of a jar and also into the form of intelligence: but consciousness cannot be changed in any manner. It can only reflect in itself intellectual modifications due to its own illuminating nature.

The reflection of consciousness in intellect, however, is incapable of revealing *buddhi-vṛttis* through which objects are manifested and enjoyed, because the image of consciousness formed in the *buddhi* is not potent enough to cause enjoyment of objects just as superimposed fire is not suitable for cooking food. Further, in the opinion of Bhikṣu, this type of double reflection does not affect the unchangeable character of spirit because change always means creation of new qualities: and no new quality is generated in the soul as a result of its union with buddhi through reflection.

From the above discussion, therefore, it would appear that according to Bhikṣu, a full-fledged experiencer emerges when *cit* is reflected in the buddhi and the apparently intelligised buddhi and its modifications are reflected back in the puruṣa. It is due to this reflection of the intellectual modifications in spirit that the false sense of ownership arises easily in the self as a result of which there happens to be '*ekamevadarśanam, khyātireva darśanam*' on the part of puruṣa.

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[2] *Tattvavaisaradi* (a) 1-4, (b) 11-24.

Now, if we reflect on these interpretations offered by the two great commentators of the classical Sāmkhya, we find that both the views can be accepted with equal cogency as explanations of the *bhoktṛbhāva* of puruṣa. Vācaspati's interpretation though severely criticised by Bhikṣu, is, in fact, not less satisfactory than his own view. We shall be able to realize the merit of Vācaspati's view provided we succeed in catching the real spirit of his brief exposition. His view is quite in keeping with his advaita position and there is no logical error even from the point of view of the dualistic Sāmkhya. The concept of *yogyatā* which Vācaspati has made use of in explaining the enjoyment of puruṣa, does not really involve any logical contradiction, if understood in its proper spirit. *Yogyatā*, in fact, implies capability inherent in the nature of the self for (1) manifesting and also for (2) appropriating through *aviveka* all modifications of *buddhi* caused by the contact of the latter with various worldly objects. That the self is ever fit for manifesting everything that comes in its way will be denied by nobody. Difficulty arises in respect of the self's capability for participating in the benefits offered by the intellect.

We should remember that this participation is logically possible due to the fact that the self is a revealing principle and in actual active state, this participation is caused by the false idea of ownership generated by *aviveka*. In fact, the Spirit's participation in worldly experience is nothing but a perverted manifestation of the visible world due to existence of ignorance in the form of a great principle of Confusion. So, enjoyment of puruṣa in the form of perception, implies truly that in the inactive state *aviveka* leads to the connecting of the spirit with the intellect which, in its turn, leads to the idea of ownership (in the spirit) from which arises immediately the experience of pleasures and pains. *Dṛsya* or the visible objectivity seems to form the *sva* of puruṣa so long as it remains entangled in the creative activities of prakṛti. Hence, *yogyatā* (for owning the experiences of pleasures and pains) becomes effective only when the self remains under the spell of ignorance. In that miserable condition of the self, mere *sannidhi* is potent enough to cause intelligisation of all that has been placed in the proximity of the puruṣa. Then, due to its inherent capability or *yogyatā*, assisted by Ignorance, the spirit comes to recognize all intelligised *buddhivṛttis* as parts and parcels of its nature. This capability or *yogyatā* (being the nature of puruṣa) does not exist as a quality to be lost in the state of liberation. Even in the state of final liberation, this fitness exists in the self, but in the absence of the medium (i.e. the intellect) through which objects are to be received, there is no revelation of objects of sense. Further, due to the total annihilation of *aviveka*, the question of having the feeling of ownership of experience on the part of the spirit does not arise at all. To a *jīvan-mukta* puruṣa who has succeeded in removing totally the veil of *aviveka*, *prakṛti* appears as wholly different from and inferior to puruṣa. There will, no doubt, be the world-sense through the operation of '*buddhivṛttis* in the active state of his worldly existence pending exhaustion of all his *prārabdha karma*. Still in his case there will no longer be "*ekameva darśanam*", even though *yogyatā* will be present, (because the latter causes confused perception only when it is assisted by *aviveka*). In the transcendental sphere, *yogyatā* exists only as the revealing capacity of puruṣa : but in the phenomenal sphere, the same revealing capacity vitiated by ignorance gives rise to a confused perception as a result of which the fictitious idea of ownership of world-experience arises in the spirit.'

Vijñāna Bhikṣu has not accepted either of these two concepts (*sannidhi* and *yogyatā*) to explain the relation of puruṣa and *buddhi*. According to him, a more satisfactory explanation can be offered by us, if we accept the theory of double reflection. Mere *cicchāyā* (reflection of consciousness) in the intellect is not suitable enough for providing the puruṣa with multi-coloured world-sense. For this purpose, all intelligised *buddhivṛttis* should be reflected back in the spirit. It is only in such a plight of puruṣa that *aviveka* is capable of generating in it the false idea of the ownership of *buddhivṛttis* as its *sva* i.e. as its own modifications. In the state of final liberation due to the absence of both ignorance and intellectual modifications, there will neither be the operation of double reflection nor the confused perception of the intellectual concepts as the self's own possession. In the *Jīvanmukta* condition also, due to the total removal of *aviveka,* there will no longer be *abheda-gṛhaṇa* and consequently, there will no more be the confused perception of the two as one.

Vācaspati being the propounder of the *Bhāmati Prasthāna* of the advaita Vedānta, has not accepted the *bimba-pratibimba-vāda* of the *vivaraṇa-school* : perhaps due to this fact in his interpretation of the *Sāmkhya-kārikā* and yoga-sūtra, he has not adopted the *bimba-pratibimba* method for the purpose of explaining the relation between puruṣa and *buddhi.* In his writings, he has used the word *cicchāyā* to refer to the relation of *cit* to intellect. That intelligisation of *buddhi* together with *aviveka* (the assisting condition) is necessary for causing the confused perception of puruṣa, has been admitted both by Vācaspati and Vijñāna Bhikṣu. While Vācaspati has mentioned *aviveka* as the sole assisting condition for causing false identity of puruṣa with intellect, Vijñāna Bhikṣu has stated a third condition in the form of the reflection of the intelligised *buddhivṛttis* in spirit.

Vācaspati has no doubt tried his best to keep unimpaired the dualistic and realistic position of the Sāmkhya by recognizing the reality of *yogyatā* and *sannidhi* : still due to his advaitic bent of mind he has explained bondage, liberation and the relation between the soul and the world as being due solely to ignorance or *aviveka* (just as in the Advaita-Vedānta of Śamkara, all these are explained as being due solely to the operation of *māyā*) but Bhikṣu, by admitting the relation of double reflection between puruṣa and *buddhi* in addition to ignorance, has succeeded more in providing us with a truly realistic explanation of the bondage and liberation of puruṣa. Otherwise, for simple understanding of the true meaning of self's enjoyment, both the theories are equally helpful to the readers.

SOME VIEWS OF SANKHYA PHILOSOPHY

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

Prakriti is called by the Sānkhya philosophers indiscrete, and defined as the perfect balance of the materials in it. According to Sānkhya, nature is omnipresent, one omnipresent mass of nature, in which are the causes of everything that exists. What is meant by cause ? Cause is the fine state of the manifested state ; the unmanifested state of that which becomes manifested. What do you mean by destruction ? It is reverting to the cause. According to modern physical science this can be demonstrated, that all destruction means that which Kapila said ages ago—simply reverting to the cause. It is curious that modern knowledge coincides with what those old philosophers taught. It must be so, and that is the proof of truth.

You must remember that the first manifestation of this Prakriti in the cosmos is what the Sankhya calls "Mahat." We may call it intelligence—the great principle, its literal meaning. The third change is manifested as universal sense organs, and universal fine particles, and these last again combine and become this gross universe which with eyes, nose and ear, we see, smell, and hear. This is the cosmic plan according to the Sānkhya, and what is in the cosmos must also be microcosmic.

—(From the *Complete Works.*)

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND HIS CONTRIBUTION TO VEDANTA

C. D. DESHMUKH

I do not presume to posit any special views in regard to the significance of Swami Vivekananda's contribution to Vedanta for the simple reason that as you listen to his words, what he meant will be crystal clear to you, as it was to hundreds of audiences all over the world, particularly in U.S.A., U.K., the Continent and then in India.

By Vedanta one should understand the speculation and philosophy that is contained in the Upaniṣads, and more specifically, — since there have been a large number of interpretations — we mean the authoritative interpretations given by Śankara. And I think in order to understand Swami Vivekananda's contribution to Vedanta, it is necessary to learn something about the nature of Vedanta as expounded by Śankara. For this part I have drawn freely on Dr N. K. Devaraja's book *An Introduction to Śankara's Theory and Knowledge*. He says : 'The Advaita of Śankara generally considered to be the crowning achievement of the philosophical speculation of ancient Hindu India is well-known. Neither before Śankara nor after him did the Hindu mind, if not the Indian mind as a whole, create a system of philosophy which could be compared with the so-called orthodox Vedanta in boldness, deftness and subtlety of speculation.' Dr. Radhakrishnan characterized Śankara's Advaita Vedanta as complete in itself justifying the wholeness characteristic of a work of art. It has been held that Śankara was greatly indebted to Buddhist thinkers. But it has also to be recognized that his system as known today owes much to his successors. Śankara was able to discredit elements in the heterodox and rival systems of his time which he held to be opposed to the letter and spirit of the *Srutis*, and he welded into a coherent and powerful system the teachings of the *Srutis*. The first principle of Advaita is the establishment of the existence of the self-luminous '*cit*' which is a deduction from experience. Since the world is non-eternal and since the non-eternal is capable of annulment, the world is unreal. Śankara held that true knowledge should relate to an object which has a constant nature or an immutable essence, and according to him only the Atman qualifies to be called real. He held that the effect differs from the cause as mere appearances differ from reality. Eddington has argued that the table presented by the senses is but an unreal appearance of the real table which belongs to the shadow world of physics. Śankara emphasized the reality which is one without a second and believed that ultimate release can be brought about by right knowledge. He held the world to be phenomenal on moral and religious grounds. The actuality of realization was as unquestionable a fact to Śankara and his contemporaries as the existence of the moral society to Plato and Aristotle. The highest goal of life, is, Śankara held, realizable here on the earth. It is an ideal which can be actualized and enjoyed by the individual in his own life-time. The ideal is progressively realized through growing detachment towards earthly values. The highest work is contained in the mind that has achieved complete detachment. The *Sakshin* or the witness Self is identical with Brahman, which is the metaphysical counterpart of the perception that highest work is contained in the mind that has achieved complete detachment. He says : सिद्धं जीवतोऽपि विदुषोऽशरीरत्वम् । तस्मान्नावगतब्रह्म भावस्य यथापूर्वं संसारित्वम् ।

This concept of freedom transcends the prevalent Western concept. According to Śankara, the individual could be completely free only through the conquest of the desires and thirsts associated with his animal nature and such freedom is enjoyed by the *Sthita-Prajna,* who is referred to in the *Gita* as the saintly person, whose wisdom is expressed in his serenity and balance. This is regarded in Advaita philosophy as the safeguard against pain and suffering. According to Vedanta the highest good of the Self is nothing extraneous to its essential nature. The Self's true nature is expressed by the phrase 'Sat, Cit and Ānanda' and the aim of man's life is to realize his nature concealed in his own being. The realization can be achieved by the destruction of *adhyāsa* or the false identification of his true Self with the empirical. What needs to be accomplished is not the knowledge or the attainment of the Self, as the removal of the appearance of the non-self in the self and *vice-versa.* तस्मात् ज्ञानयत्नो न कर्तव्यः किन्तु अनात्मबुद्धिनिवृत्तौ एव ।

But this intuition is not absolute knowledge. It leads to it. Having destroyed other limitations, the mental mood dies a natural death even as fire dies after consuming the fuel. According to the Upaniṣads 'Sat' existed before the beginning of cosmos. According to Śankara *adhyāsa* or the duality of Self as agent and enjoyer is without beginning or end, and there never existed a time when Brahman existed apart from or without the world. Absolute consciousness emerges as the state in the world process itself. It is realized in the sages who have attained the lofty status of *Jivanmukti.* This has great humanistic implications. Although there is the Self hidden in everything, owing to the gradual rise of excellence of the physical conditions limiting it the Self manifests itself in higher and higher forms in respect of power and splendour. यद्यपि एक एवात्मा सर्वभूतेषु स्थावरजंगमेषु गूढस्तथापि चित्तोपाधिविशेषतारतम्यत्वादात्मनः उत्तरोत्तराविष्कृतस्य तारतम्यैश्वर्यशक्तिविशेषैः श्रूयते ।

Neither the Vedanta of Śankara nor the previous *Sūnyavāda* of Buddhists does full justice — and that is the general verdict so to speak from the modern view — to the values other than religion. Both the systems fail to assign ultimate metaphysical values to the life of moral action nor do they express any solicitude for such human values as arts and literature, love and friendship. Whilst it is recommended that the aspiring man should cultivate the virtues of compassion and general friendliness — अद्वेष्टा सर्वभूतानां मैत्रः करुण एव च । — he is not encouraged to develop loving attachment either to the beautiful or the virtuous. Not paying much attention to the duties involved in the community life of man they seek to analyse or describe the course of discipline which would lead to the flowering of saintly virtues in the life of the individual. And although they advocate a life devoted to the eradication of selfish and narrow attachments to earthly values, the greatest service which the unselfish individual can render to his fellow beings is the service involved in the dissemination of spiritual wisdom. But they seem to ignore spiritual and cultural activities which enrich (not only ennoble) life. They do not pay sufficient attention to the potentialities of man to rise spiritually higher on the plane of his spatio-temporal or historical existence. Now I have referred to this because it is just these lacunae which were made up by Vivekananda. In other words his contribution to Vedanta may succinctly be said to be, to fill up these gaps in the development of the Advaita Philosophy.

Coming back to Śankara, Śankara influenced the philosophies of the Bhāgavatas, the Śāktās and Śaivas etc. The northern schools, influenced important writers on aesthetic, particularly of the *Rasa* school, the medieval poets and reformers like Kabir, Tulsidas and Nanak. Advaita Vedanta experienced a sort of renaissance during the later half of the 19th and the earlier half of the 20th century, when teachers and thinkers like Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa, Vivekananda and Aurobindo, either interpreted or re-formulated it so as to meet the requirements of the modern age.

Now succinctly again, one would say that so far as Vivekananda was concerned his contribution was the application of Vedanta, the theory of Vedanta, to daily life. If the theory of Vedanta was formulated by Śankara, you might say that the amplitude of its application was the work of Swami Vivekananda. Here is a quotation from him regarding Advaita in practical life because he laid a very great emphasis on practice. 'Believe, therefore, in yourselves and if you want material wealth, work it out; it will come to you. If you want to be intellectual giants, you shall be. And if you want to attain to freedom, work it out on the spiritual plane and free you shall be and shall enter into *Nirvana,* the Eternal Bliss.' 'But one defect' he goes on to say, 'which lay in the Advaita was its being worked out so long on the spiritual plane only and no where else. Now the time has come when you have to make it practical. It shall no more be a *Rahasya,* a secret, it shall no more live with monks in caves and forests and in the Himalayas. It must come down to the daily, everyday life of the people. It shall be worked out in the palace of the kings, in the cave of the recluse, it shall be worked out in the cottage of the poor, by the beggar in the street; anywhere it can be worked out.'

Swami Vivekananda has spoken and written much on the principles of Vedanta. Here are a few sayings which have been culled from a book, entitled "What Religion Is" compiled from the *Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda* by John Yale. There is a section in it on the principles and the practices of Vedanta. One proposition is, when a man has reached the universal brotherhood, that man alone is Vedantic. Two, this Māyā is everywhere. It is terrible. Yet we have to work through it. The way is not with Māyā, but against it. Again the Swami says: 'At every step we are knocked down by Māyā and it shows that we are bound and yet at the same moment, together with this blow, comes the other feeling that we are free. The same world that was the ghastly battlefield of Māyā is now changed into something good and beautiful.' 'This is the gist of Vedantic morality, this sameness for all.' Again, 'the alpha and omega of Vedanta philosophy is to give up the world, to give up the unreal and taking the real. Each thought and deed lays up a store for you and bad thoughts and bad works are ready to spring upon you like tigers. So there is the inspiring hope that good thought and good deed are ready with the power of a hundred thousand angels to defend you. Lastly, Vedanta does not denounce the world. It really means deification of the world, giving up the world as we think of it, as we know it, as it appears to us and to know what it really is; deified it is God alone.'

These are some of the quotations which would give an idea of what Vivekananda considered were the principles or doctrines of Vedanta. Some of you must be knowing that he delivered four lectures in London in November 1896 on 'Practical Vedanta'. I shall give you a synopsis of his exposition of Practical Vedanta in order that you may see, apply the principles of Vedanta to the problems of life, which he even in his days describes as modern life, and how he squared it with the tests that might be imposed by philosophy and science. And it is a fact that he was well-acquainted with writings in the modern philosophic field and he was generally aware of the advances of science in his days.

He began by saying that Vedanta as a religion must be intensely practical. He regarded the *Bhagavad Gītā* as the best commentary on Vedanta whose message is Eternal Calmness in the midst of intense activity. Passion, he says, is not necessary for work because it dissipates energy. And there are two tendencies in human nature, — one is to harmonise the ideal with life and the other elevate life to the ideal. Obviously he thought that what man should aim at is not the first one, make terms with whatever his inferiority was, but to try to elevate life to the ideal. Then he describes what the ideal of Vedanta is. The ideal of Vedanta is *Tattvamasi* 'Thou art That.' Vedanta teaches man to have faith in himself first. Vedanta recognizes no sin, only error. That is the essence of Vedanta. He had a lot to say about sin and its recognition because he was speaking to a predominantly Christian audience. Everything is ours already, he says, infinite purity, freedom, love and power, but all this must manifest itself. The scales must drop from our eyes and this can come by thinking in everyday life. The present life should be made to coincide with Life Eternal.

The central idea of Vedanta is oneness — in man, animal and all creation. And this is realized in varying degrees. If you believe there is a God, the animals and the highest creatures, must be the same and he warns his fellow-beings that we have no right to look down with contempt upon those who have not developed exactly to the same degree as we are. Then he has a message of hope for mankind. 'You can do anything and everything. You are almighty and religion must help man whatever his state of development. We must hear a voice in our ears day and night that we are Atman, the soul. Humbling yourselves, praying, weeping to the imaginary beings — these are mere superstitions. You must tell that to others.' 'Show mankind their power,' and that brings him to the subject of love for man, which is a binding force because of this doctrine of Oneness and Ultimate Power and here he has a caveat to enter against intellectual perception. He says intellectual perception is not enough, and this is, I think, where he elaborates what was not contained in the original formulation of Vedanta Philosophy. We know that intellectuality is almost nothing, for it is the heart that is of the utmost importance. It is feeling that is the life, the strength — the vitality — without which no amount of intellectual activity can help us reach God. Breathing is part of Brahman, sight is a part, feeling is a part, the mind is a part. There is a voice inside us to which we should listen. 'The moment,' he says, 'I have realized God sitting in the temple of every human body, the moment I stand in reverence before every human being and see God in him, that moment I am free from bondage. Everything that binds vanishes and I am free.' Then he asks, 'Do you feel for others?' 'If you do, you are growing in oneness. If you do not feel for others, you may be the most intellectual giant ever born, but you will be nothing. You are but a dry intellect, you will remain so. Feeling is one of the most practical things in Vedantic morality for it is the teaching of the Vedanta that you are all prophets and all must be prophetic. The book is not the proof of your conduct, but you are the proof of the book. How do you know that the book teaches truth? Because you are truth and feel it, that is what the Vedanta says.'

Then he remarks how this comes to you. He says, 'The voice of truth is inside ourselves. Understand and see the Lord in everything to see things in their real nature, not as they appear to be. But realization must come to you. Religion is ever a practical science and there never was, nor will be a theological religion. Realizing the truth means piercing the veil of Māyā and recognizing neither good nor bad, but knowing all as coming from the Self.' The Self is in everything according to Vedanta. He said when a man has arrived at the perception that is neither good nor bad, neither life nor death, the one infinite Brahman, then man has become free. He says, 'I shall call you religious from the day you begin to see God in men and women. As our human relationships can thus be made Divine, so our relationship with God may take any of these forms. We can look upon Him then as Father, Mother, Friend and Beloved. But those who worship God through ceremonials and forms, however crude, we may think them, are not in error. It is the journey from truth to truth; from lower truth to higher truth.'

Again he says: 'What is darkness? Darkness means less light. What is evil? Evil is less good. What is impurity? Impurity is less purity. If you are free you must know that all will be so sooner or later,' that is to say you will progress from step to step, will be more enlightened, more good and will become pure.

Then he develops the philosophy of religion as a march from the particular to the general. There is one omnipresent ether and from that he proceeds to postulate one all-embracing force which you call Prāṇa. He says, 'a theory of religion has to stand the test of the modern scientific mind. Is it sufficient generalization? And do we explain nature from nature?' The idea of personal God, he says, does not stand these tests, but that, of the Impersonal God does. And the impersonal being is in ourselves, 'Tat Twam Asi.'. This is the monism of the of the Vedanta.

We derive our ethics from monism only, especially ethics which are universally acceptable. According to him, the monistic theory has this merit that it is the most rational of all the religious theories that we can conceive of. Infinite power and existence and blessedness are ours and we are not to acquire them. They are our own and we have only to manifest them. Then he develops his ideas, the Vedantic ideas of the particular in relation to the universal. It is true that we cannot think of the substance as separate from its quality and we cannot think of change and no change at the same time. It would be impossible. But the very thing which is substance is according to the Advaita, the quality. Substance and quality are not two things. It is the unchangeable that is appearing as changeable.

One of the remarkable features of the Advaita system of Vedanta is to harmonize the preceding systems. Dualism and all other systems that had preceded it are accepted by Advaita not in a patronizing way but with the conviction that they are the manifestations of the same truth and they all lead to the same conclusions as Advaita has reached. Selfishness and unselfishness, have been two forces working side by side. Vivekananda asks, 'What right has any section of the community to base the whole work and evolution of the universe upon one of these two factors alone, upon competition and struggle? The motive power of the whole universe, in whatever way it manifests itself, is that wonderful thing—unselfishness, renunciation, love—the real, the only living force in existence. To reach the real basis of morality and ethics you must have the highest philosophical and scientific conceptions. Human knowledge is not antagonistic to human well-being. On the contrary it is knowledge alone that will save us in every department of life. In knowledge is worship. All truth is eternal, truth is nobody's property. No race, no individual can lay any exclusive claim to it. Truth is the nature of all souls who can lay any special claim to it, but it has to be made practical, to be made simple.' He adds that the highest truths are always simple, so that they may penetrate every part of human society and become the property of the highest intellects and the commonest minds of the man, woman, and child at the same time. 'All these ratiocinations and logic, all these bundles of metaphysics, all these theologies and ceremonies may have been good in their own time, but let us try to make things simpler and to bring about the golden days when every man will be worshipper and the Reality in every man will be the object of worship.'

This is the essence of the four lectures that Vivekananda gave and I think I have quoted at length. One can go on quoting—but one would have realized that in applying the theory of Vedanta, is that something which had not been done before. It had been expounded on the religious plane, it had been expounded on the philosophical plane but Vivekananda brought in the spiritual, social and moral content of life into a most practical way. And, as you might have noticed, he also reconciled all his thinking with the rigorous requirements of reason, came nearest to modern philosophy and science, and it seems to me that he has been successful in establishing or formulating the essentials of a Universal Religion which could be practised by high and low, irrespective of time and space. His message with its emphasis on the oneness of everything and based on love, unselfishness, renunciation, fellowship, seems to be particularly apt for the present-day world. And it seems to me that if this practical philosophy and religion is embraced by human beings, then the future of the world could be quite different from what one in one's pessimism would be inclined to believe, from the modern developments in the world of international relations.

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(Latu Maharaj)

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the July issue*)

1882

The Master, accompanied by Lātu, had come to Balaram Babu's residence. This was the first time that Lātu had come to Balaram's. Balaram Babu used to dress himself like a Sikh, with a big turban. So it was but natural for Lātu to mistake him. He said: 'Look here. When I first saw him I could not take him as a Bengali. He did not wear dhoti and chaddar as the Bengalis do. He had a long stick in hand, a big turban on the head and a long flowing overcoat-like thing, covering his entire body. He grew a long beard, but he was very lean and thin. We had to go to him very often.'

Now let us narrate what Lātu Maharaj said of this gentleman. We string together in a narrative what we had heard from Lātu Maharaj on different occasions.

'The Master used to say, "It (Balaram's house) is our Baghbazar fortress." Daily worship of Lord Jagannātha was regularly performed there; so he (the Master) regarded the food at Balaram's as very pure. There was a sort of miniature car festival in his house. He used to feed the devotees on such occasions very devotedly. He (Balaram) used to keep account of the Master's visits to his house. I have heard it said that it numbered as much as a hundred times.... Balaram now and then visited Dakshineswar. Master said, "Balaram belonged to Lord Gauranga's inner circle people," — the Master saw him in Lord Gauranga's company of *sankirtan* singers (in a vision). . . . Balaram used to take the Master to the *zenana* (inner apartments). His brother, Harivallabh Babu did not like it — they (the ladies of the house) observed *purdāh*. Our Girish Babu was intimate with Harivallabh. He came to know of this and once called Harivallabh to meet the Master when the latter was there. Harivallabh came and took his seat in front of the Master. Can you guess what happened? Both of them shed profuse tears. There was no talk, mere weeping. I could not understand anything. Later, once I went to Cuttack to know this. But Harivallabh Babu kept it to himself. Balaram Babu used to feed the Master's devotees, for which he saved money by curtailing other expenses. His relatives used to call him miserly — how would they know his purpose? I had no idea of how rich he was. One day I saw him occupying a bed that appeared to me to be too narrow and too scanty. I told him, "This bed, Sir, is too short for you, please make a better one." Do you know what he said in reply? He said, "Of earth this body is made and down will it go to earth. But the money thus saved will be utilized in serving the sādhus." I was stunned. How great was his desire to serve sādhus can be well guessed from this spontaneous reply of his. . . . His daughter's marriage was celebrated with great *eclat*. He had no intention to spend so much for it. He used to say, "to feed one's relatives is as good as feeding ghosts", quite a useless affair. At last he pressed Yogin, to take something. When he did it, Balaram Babu was satisfied. I heard it from Brother Yogin that Balaram Babu told him, "Today I have spent so much on provisions but my heart is crying. If you take something of it I will be gratified." Brother Yogin had to yield. . . . He used to love us very dearly. I stayed long in his house. Many of our brother monks used to visit his house. Rākhāl, Sarat, Yogin, Tārak, Mahim, Kāli — they were almost the daily visitors to his house. And he used to mix with them very intimately.'

'One day Balaram Babu hired a carriage for the Master from Baghbazar to Dakshineswar at twelve annas only — it was so cheap. But the Master had to undergo many difficulties. At one place one wheel got detached from the carriage. And the horses played mischief. If they were whipped they galloped off and when the smacking stopped the horses stopped moving also. In this way, when he reached Dakshineswar it was very late at night. The Master used to crack jokes over this incident.'

Another incident: 'Balaram Babu invited many of us to lunch. Rākhāl was there too. It was getting inordinately late and Rākhāl fell asleep. All of us finished our meal, Rākhāl was still sleeping. At this the Master told a story: "Once a man came to witness a theatrical performance. He brought a mat under his arm-pit. He found out that it would take some time before the performance would start. So he spread the mat and fell into a deep sleep. When he woke up he found everything was over and the people were all gone. He felt sorry that he could not witness such an interesting play. What would he tell his people when he reached home? So he questioned people about the subject of the play and gathered all relevant information about the performance, and started talking to people about the quality of the play. Emboldened he talked even to them who saw the fellow snoring all the while the play was going on. They said, 'Fellow don't brag. Have we not seen you snoring throughout? When did you see it?' The fellow got angry and said, 'A rascal alone would say like that.' Blows followed words."

A devotee: 'What does the story signify, Maharaj?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Ah simpleton? Don't you understand this? You have read so much and you do not understand this simple thing?'

Devotee: 'No Maharaj, we have failed to understand it.'

Lātu Maharaj: 'He narrated the story referring to his children, "You have come here to this world to witness the Lord's sport. Don't fall asleep. Be ever wakeful in the practice of religion. Without an all-out attempt to realize the Lord you will not enjoy the fun of the sport. Quarrels will ensue. One will say 'The Lord is like this' another 'No, He is like that'. And then they will come to blows. Do you not see what shiploads of theories about the Lord come out in print every day? And what a noise over them! But those who have practised religion and have realized the Lord have no quarrels. All of them say the same thing, sing the same note. All quarrels are among the followers of the founders of religion. It is they who twist and torture their words and passages."'

Lātu Maharaj was an eye-witness of many events that occurred in Balaram's house. We narrate below just a few of them. It was here that Lātu saw Rākhāl Maharaj dancing in ecstasy for the first time. It was here he saw Avadhūta Nityagopal standing transfixed in ecstasy for hours together when Sri Ramakrishna brought him back to normal consciousness. It was here that the Master shed tears for the first time hearing Naren's songs. It was here that Lātu heard Master saying to a Tantric that there were such worthless persons who could never cast away doubts about their *gurus*. If you want to be a disciple of somebody you should have faith in what he says, whatever might be the quality of the *guru*. Again about the Tantric practices he said: 'Now-a-days in this Kali Yuga these Tantric practices are beset with dangers. It is not for anybody and everybody to start practising them. Tantric practices are for the brave alone, for people who have absolute self-control. Those alone who are pure in heart succeed in these practices.' It was here again that the Master saw Girish Babu for the first time. Tulsi Maharaj also came in contact with the Master for the first time here. Younger Naren, Harinath and many others did the same here.

* * *

1882

The attendant Lātu had accompanied the Master to the house of the devotee, Prāṇakrishna Mukherji, whom the Master called 'the fat Brahmin'. Prāṇakrishna used to visit Dakshineswar very often, and would invite the Master to his house now and then and celebrate the occasions with devotional music and feasts. The peculiarity of these celebrations was that Lātu, unlike those in other houses, had not to work hard or at all. At Adhar Sen's house also Lātu was free and could enjoy the Master's talks. It was at this 'fat Brahmin's' house that Lātu could have an intimate talk with Bāburām (Swami Premananda) for the first time. About a week prior to it Bāburām had come to Dakshineswar, but Lātu, busy with the multifarious duties, could not get acquainted with him. Lātu Maharaj narrated the incident thus: 'It was at his (Prāṇakrishna's) house that I and Bāburām of Āntpur got acquainted. Bāburām was then very young, fair-complexioned and beautiful, though a little thin. The Master loved him dearly. I have heard, his mother made a gift of the boy to the Master. How wonderful! A mother can part with everything but her child! But look at this lady's greatness. She handed over her child to the Master for the child's spiritual enlightenment. It is a great good fortune to get such a mother. Do you think a mother like that is an ordinary lady — one who can bless the child and say "Be a monk and attain God" and part with him? She has herself attained salvation, to be sure. Such mothers do not like that their children should suffer the pangs of a worldly life. They think, "Let us suffer, let the children be free."'

Now let us return to what Lātu heard the Master say at Prāṇakrishna Babu's house. 'There I heard the Master say, "A servant of the Lord should be very watchful over lust, anger and greed. Look at Mahavira (Hanuman). Under the influence of anger what a ghastly act did he not do — he burnt the capital Lanka, almost to ashes with the fire of his tail! Anger is such a horrible thing." He (Master) used to say, "What can he not do, one who has practised self-control?" Often did we hear him say, "Never allow any latitude to lust, anger and greed," and would add, "But the rascals are tenacious, would not leave man easily. So the best way to deal with them is to turn them so as to be helpful in the realization of God. For example: say to lust, 'Fellow, don't leave me, do one thing. You want fullest communion with one. Isn't it? Commune with the Lord, who is the most beautiful, most lovable.' Tell anger, 'Look here, show your strength by restraining the desire for "woman and gold". There demonstrate what power and fury you possess.' When such desires would come to you thunder out so that those mean fellows might take to their heels, and leave you alone. Similarly when greed will assail you, say, 'Comrade, you are most welcome. But why crave for petty things? Run after the Lord whose powers and treasures are infinite. He is the fittest object of your attainment.'"

'One story about the "fat-Brahmin". That day, the audience was a little more. Some were praising the "fat Brahmin". The Master enjoyed their conversation for a while and then said, "what wonder is there that he would cherish such love and regard for me? I have greased his palm." Bewildered, they at once looked at him. The Master smiled and said, "You know I blessed him and he had a child. Since then he started inviting me and celebrating the occasions with festivities." Referring to this, the Master said he bribed Prāṇakrishna.'

A devotee: 'Is it not very strange that the Master who had himself renounced "woman and gold" would pray for somebody else's son?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'What of that? What harm is there to pray like that? The purpose of creation is to know the creator. If getting a son one calls on God — and it is quite possible — is not one benefited thereby?'

The devotee: 'We are married people. Why cannot we call on God? Most of our difficulties are because of having a large number of children. That is why we cannot call on God.'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Yes, that is true in cases like yours. But that is because you are too engrossed in worldly matters to remember God. If, however, you train up the whole family, children and all, and call on Him along with them all your difficulties will vanish, and the children will also be blessed.'

Another devotee: 'Maharaj, you are a monk, you will not understand where the shoe pinches. How hopelessly involved we become with our children and grandchildren you cannot conceive of. I sit for meditation and a child starts crying. I start praying, another child cries out "Pa food, hunger". I open the Gita, at once a third asks me to help him with his lesson. Am taking a little rest, wife orders to catch the baby. Even when sleeping, we are not free; a child cries out, "Pa, piss". Now tell me, Maharaj, with all these obstacles, how can we call on the Lord?'

Hearing all these, Lātu Maharaj said, 'Well, there's a difference between your household and that of the 'fat Brahmin'. He was so rich, a Zamindar. People like him are not to bother themselves for bringing up their children, they engage nurses. Our Master played that trick to bring him round to God. He blessed him so that he may have a child, and out of gratitude he turned towards God.'

The devotee: 'Maharaj, the Lord alone understands His sports. We don't.'

Lātu Maharaj: 'How would you? First engage yourself in spiritual practices; then you will understand everything — what are the obstacles in one's spiritual path, how will they be removed, and all that.'

During his apprenticeship as a servant of the Lord, Lātu Maharaj learnt many lessons. Below is an instance of his idea about holy places, which he learnt from the Master: 'When one visits a holy place one must hear its history, how the place was made holy, what special manifestation of divine grace occurred there. As one hears these stories one's mind gets attached to the Lord and the heart overflows with love divine. And when you go to such places you should perform certain duties enjoined by the scriptures. To pass a few nights at a place of pilgrimage is as meritorious as keeping company of holy men. These places are meant for performing spiritual practices — prayer, meditation, austerities. Whoever engage themselves in these practices are rewarded with quick results — the atmosphere is so favourable.'

We then come to the topic of Vidyasagar. Lātu Maharaj heard high praises of Vidyasagar from the Master, and his heart purified by his service to the Master, got so much attached to Vidyasagar that he waited several days on the street in front of the college, that bears his name now, to have a glimpse of his face. Not only that, whenever Lātu Maharaj would come to Calcutta he would make it a point to see Vidyasagar once. After waiting for several days when, at last, he succeeded, in seeing Vidyasagar he saluted him in all humility but did not talk to him. We quote Lātu Maharaj's own words:

"When he met Vidyasagar, Master said, 'At long last I have come to the ocean.' Do you know what Vidyasagar's quip was? 'Then take some saline water from it' — was his reply. Master's repartee went one step higher. Said he, "Dear Sir, it is not an ocean of saline water that I have come to, but an ocean of nectar. You are an ocean of learning, of knowledge, not of ignorance' . . . I used to sit by the wayside to catch a glimpse of Vidyasagar — many days passed but I could not succeed. Luckily one day I saw him. Know for certain that the sight of such persons imparts merit. Very rare are persons so charitably disposed as he. In this Iron Age charity is the greatest virtue. He practised this virtue to the utmost. Is it any wonder that he transcended all weaknesses? . . . During his life time many did not understand him, consequently they called him an atheist. In fact he was not. Master used to say 'He is a worshipper of the Vast'. What kindness to the poor and the uncared for! How secretly did he help them! No one could know about his charitable deeds. . . .Look here. There was no trace of egotism in him. Just imitate that. He was such a great scholar, so rich; his social position was so high. Name and fame, power and position, wealth and scholarship, which man aspires for, he had in abundance. And with all that how freely did he use to mix with all and sundry, how his purse remained open for the poor and the needy! Nobody ever heard him speak about his charity. If somebody would speak ill of him he would say to him, 'Dear Sir, did I ever do a good turn to you? It is but natural for you to speak like that.'

"One day Sri Ramakrishna narrated an incident from Vidyasagar's life. During those days he brought a veritable hornet's nest about his ears by his advocacy of widow re-marriage. He was sitting and leisurely smoking in a grocer's shop when there came a Brahmin pundit, who engaged himself in a random talk with the Vidyasagar. He did not know that the person to whom he was talking was none other than Vidyasagar himself. In the course of the talk the topic of widow re-marriage cropped up and the pundit was beside himself in rage and went on abusing him in filthy language. Among other things he said, 'if ever I happen to meet him I would beat him to death.' Vidyasagar maintained his smile in spite of the provocation and quietly asked if he knew Vidyasagar. Just mark his patience and good nature. Can you do like that? If you give a penny you make the market hot with trumpeting. And look at his charity. He gave so much and his left hand did not know what his right was doing. He was indeed a divine personality, eh! Our Master used to say, 'In the next birth he will come with even greater powers . . . ' What do you know of the sorrows of widows? He understood it, felt it very deeply; and gave such a tough fight for it that even the Viceroy had to intervene in his favour! And what would you have done? At best you would have shed a few idle tears. There the matter would have rested . . . You talk of charity? Ancestral money is squandered in the name of charity to get high-sounding titles from the government. But to earn honestly and then to give unstintedly is rare indeed! Blessed is he who does it. (The person Lātu Maharaj was talking to was himself a trustee of a big estate.) . . . Vidyāsagar, Keshav Chandra Sen, Vijaya Goswami, Mahendra Sarkar — they are not fools. All of them were great scholars. They all recognized the greatness of our Master; they honoured him highly. They did it not for nothing, they must have been struck with something unique in him. Men respect noble qualities wherever they see them manifest. Vidyasagar had another great quality. He held his mother in high esteem. It was his mother's blessings that brought him success in every one of his undertakings. One who does not revere one's mother is not worth a penny. Do you think such a man will ever realize God? One who fails to obey his mother will fail also to carry out the orders of his guru. How would there be progress in his spiritual life? Citing Vidyasagar as a shining example of charity he (Sri Ramakrishna) taught a good lesson to the heads of Indian monasteries. He said, 'Just look at this wonderful householder (Vidyasagar), his renunciation and service. He gave away all his hard-earned money. And you are all sannyasins, you cannot give up the hoarding propensity?'"

We have heard from Lātu Maharaj, while he was living at the Balaram Mandir, that the Master went to attend the great celebration at Sinthi in the year he first paid his visit to Vidyasagar. From this we conclude the time of this visit to be the year 1882. We can cite another incident to corroborate this statement. In a talk the Master said that he saw Acharya Shivanath Shastri for the first time at this celebration. From M's record in the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna* we know that our Master attended the Sinthi celebration on October 28, 1882.

Lātu Maharaj: 'Keshav Babu and his party used to celebrate their annual function in the company of the Master with great pomp at the garden at Sinthi. Great personages used to be invited.'

(To be continued)

THE HUNDRED THOUSAND SONGS OF MILAREPA*

M. P. PANDIT

The two magnificent volumes containing the full translation in English of the *Mila Grubum* or 'Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa', are a splendid tribute to the memory of the greatest poet-yogi of Tibet. All the pains taken by the translator have been worthwhile and the whole work reads like an original, placing the reader back into the mountains and valleys of that ancient land face to face with the men, women, demons, goddesses and Gurus among whom Milarepa moved.

Milarepa was born in the beginning of the 11th century A.D. in a rich family. But early in his infancy he lost his father and his unscrupulous uncle and aunt deprived him and his mother (and a sister) of their properties and they underwent great hardships. When the boy grew up, the mother prevailed upon him to learn black magic from the sorcerers and bring ruin to the family of the uncle and also destroy the fields of the whole village as their owners had acquiesced in the injustice. Dutifully young Milarepa went and learnt the black art and wreaked vengeance as told by his mother. But soon he was overcome by great remorse and could neither sleep nor keep awake, neither sit nor stand. He went in search of *Dharma* and was guided to the master yogi Marpa, disciple of Pandit Naropa in India and famous for his translations of Sanskrit treatises. The great Guru, however, perceived the strong *karmic* legacy around the disciple in whom he at once saw immense potentialities and subjected him to rigorous and unheard of tests which the youngster somehow got through. After Marpa was satisfied that the ground was cleared, he initiated the disciple in the High Knowledge of Liberation and guided him into the prescribed practice. Milarepa applied himself with all the concentration and energy he was capable of and after a number of years of meditations and other exercises of *Mahamudra Yoga*, blossomed into a great Teacher himself. He taught no philosophy but only spoke of his own experiences in extempore song — for he was a born poet with an excellent voice — and communicated his enlightenment to those who came to him to seek or to scoff. Nobody knows how many songs he sang but tradition has it that it was one hundred thousand. The present work is a translation of an original in Tibetan which records many of these poems with a running commentary giving the background of each.

The book is divided into three sections. The first relates to the subjugation and conversion of Demons by Milarepa during the course of his austerities. Graphic descriptions of the eerie beings and their diabolical activities are given and it is recorded how the yogi won them over by concentrated radiations of deep Compassion.

The second section deals with his human disciples (for even the gods are said to have received his help) and is full of moving accounts of the tender way in which he brought up those whom he accepted in the Way of the Buddha. His meeting with Rechungpa and his subsequent relations with him during their long, long association; the coming of the holy Gambopa as predicted centuries earlier by Gautama Buddha; the divine abandon with which the Guru emptied himself of his spiritual treasures; the pains he took to guide their meditations in the required direction — all these are the highlights of this part.

The third section contains miscellaneous songs and stories giving an interesting peep into the customs and people of that age.

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[*] This is a review article on the *Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa* (*Vols. I and II*). Translated by Garma C. C. Chang. Pub. University Books Inc. New Hyde Park. New York; Oriental Studies Foundation, New York. pp. 729+xvii. Price $ 20.

The central Teaching of Milarepa may be said to be derived from Tibetan Tantrism which developed techniques to translate into practice the Teachings of the *Mahāyāna*. The emphasis was on practice and realisation with the minimum of attention to the theory. Milarepa following the tradition of his Gurus, exerted himself in the Way of *Mahamudra* which concentrates upon Mind as the key to the Universe and follows a discipline of emptying the mind till the Awareness of the Void which is its real nature is attained. This Void is not a zero but an Illumination which leads to a positive state of Bliss that not only takes up the whole of the being in itself but flows out on all sentient beings through the perfected one. The main process is that of regulation of Prana which is intimately connected with the Mind, attainment of complete mastery over the vital energies, and a progressive thinning of the mind culminating in its dissolution in the Great Mind. And there is more. But for that the reader should go to the Book.

THE GREAT EQUATION

(*Continued from the July issue*)

S. K. GUPTA

Aaruṇi : That Reality is Unitary, that is to say, its effects, that is the world of experience, are not constituted of any other causal principle. It is the only Cause.

Similarly it is without a Second — bereft of any otherness. Besides the material cause clay, the pottery have other causes, efficient and occasional, like the potter, his wheel etc. But the Prime Cause of this Universe needs no auxiliaries — it has no ancillaries. In fact there is no other Reality besides the One. It is both the sculptor and the marble.

Now this Principle of 'Sat' must not be confused with the Kaṇādian Concept of 'Sat', which co-inheres in, is co-present in the three categories, Thing, Quality and Motion. That concept is an abstraction, the greatest common measure of all existents. Things exist, qualities exist, motion exists, therefore all these three particular categories come under the Universal 'Existence', 'Sat', i.e. existence in general. It follows, therefore, that this 'Sat' is contemporaneous with the objective world and is in no way causally related to it. In fact according to that School, effects do not exist prior to their generation and thus could not have existed as 'Sat' in the potential stage. The 'Sat' or 'Reality' mentioned here is pre-existent to and the sole Cause of this empirical world. This is clear from the analogy of clay, gold, iron, etc. There is thus a world of difference between the Vedantic Concept of 'Sat' and the Vaiśeṣika (Kaṇādian) Concept of 'Sat'.

In determining the First Principle, the Nihilistic metaphysicians (Vaināśikas) hold that in the pre-objective state the sense world was just a negation of existence, non-existence, a vacuum. And this vacuum was one without a second. These rationalists just posit a negation and not any principle competing with 'Sat' in the pre-manifest state, unlike the Nyāya School which naively posits the dual contradictory principles of 'Sat' and 'Asat' — Existence and Non-Existence, based on common experience.

The Nihilistic view is self-contradictory. How could negation exist? How could it have a temporal, numerical or qualitative relation? Do not they say that this negative principle existed in the pre-manifest state, it was One and without a Second? Their entire thinking is confused. It would be ridiculous to say that this World Existed as a 'negation of existence, one and without a second'. These positive predicates hardly apply to a Principle of Negation. Pure Non-Existence or Vacuum is also inconceivable — for there would be no subject in such a scheme of things to conceive. So they have to fall back on sheer imagination, which is quite unjustified.

Although the Nihilistic view does not correspond with fact, it is being discussed as a sort of an aid to the right view. A rider uses reins to restrain the horse from straying from the chosen track. The Nihilistic view leads to the erroneous conclusion that things come out of nothing. It is to guard against this error and to lead the thinker to the correct view that this is being discussed. True knowledge lies in equating the expressions 'Reality', 'One' and 'Without a Second'. Well Son, how can they prove this fiction that things come out of nothing?

Śwetaketu : Sir, the seed must perish before the seedling sprouts. Therefore, they hold that 'nothing' is the Cause of 'thing'.

Aaruni : But this has no factual basis. The constituent parts of the seed follow into the seedling, they do not perish. Nor can it be said that the structure of the seed is destroyed before the seedling appears — for even the Nihilists would not aver that the structure, as distinct from the parts, is a separate entity. Granting even that it is a separate entity, it cannot be apprehended.

It would be fatuous to hold that the destruction of the structure is to be apprehended by implication. For what is the nature of this implication? Is it a positive or a negative entity? If negative, the inference would be vitiated by absence of example. Every inference has to be supported by a perceived instance of a similar nature. For example, when one infers fire from the appearance of smoke, one assimilates one's previous experience of kitchen fire emitting smoke, with present experience. A negative entity would naturally lack such assimilation. If positive, the argument fails, for in that case, the seedling does not come out of any non-existent entity. Wheat seeds produce wheat seedlings while paddy seeds produce paddy seedlings and not *vice versa*. There is thus an identity of the parts or constituents of the seed with those of the seedling. This fact would show that the parts do not perish.

In the process of mutation there are subtler and subtler parts of each part constituting the seed almost infinitesimally and so at no stage is there a complete cessation of existence. The causal nexus never snaps. There cannot be any break in the chain of ideas of existents. The sense world appears as a stream of events causally interrelated and not as a succession of intermittent shocks. The Nihilists can never cite an instance of 'being' stemming from 'non-being'.

On the contrary it is common experience that every object has a material cause, pots are made out of clay; had there been no clay, there would have been no pots. If pots could be made out of nothing, the potter would not have bothered to collect clay. If objects could be produced out of nothing, they would be named in a negative way. Instead of calling a pot an 'earthen pot', one would have perhaps called it a 'nothing pot'.

To a subjective idealist, the idea of clay is the cause of the idea of the pot — the clay or the pot does not exist in reality, only ideas exist. But even then, it is the idea of the cause and not the idea of negation that produces the idea of the effect. Nor do the two ideas indicate only sequence and not causal connection. In fact in the psychic continuum no idea is adventitious, each idea is causally related to those preceding it. The contrary view is not supported by facts.

Therefore, I say, my dear, that the theory that 'being' comes out of 'non-being' has no foundation in fact, it can never be proved.

Śwetaketu : But surely, the Vedantists also cannot cite any instance in which an existent produces another existent — a pot does not produce a second pot.

Aaruṇi : True, an existent does not produce a second existent, but it assumes a different structure, a different form. A snake coils up, clay is converted into dust, lump, pot, potsherds etc. and thus takes on diverse forms.

Śwetaketu : If that one Reality is thus diversely presented why say this empirical world *was* "Sat" prior to its generation? It always *has been*.

Aaruṇi : But have I not told you that this objective world, denoted by *"this"* was just *Sat*? At the pre-appearance stage, the sense-world could not have existed as such.

Śwetaketu : Well, if that be so at least the empirical world denoted by "this" did not exist at that stage and therefore "Being" stems from "Non-Being".

Aaruṇi : No, in that stage Reality existed as the object of the concept "this" — just as clay remains the object of the concepts, lump, dust, pot and so on, before these particularized objects appear.

Śwetaketu : It is not very clear, father. Just as clay is an entity, so are its various products — they are all different from one another. Therefore the content of the concept of Reality, as Cause, must be different from that of the concept of Reality as effect, as a horse is different from a cow.

Aaruṇi : No. Although the products like dust, or lump or pots differ from each other, they are all identical with the Cause Clay. They are essentially Clay. So the difference is not a difference in kind like that of a cow and a horse. The effects or products are mere variations in the structure or form of the Cause — they are mere mutations. Therefore the empirical world, in the last analysis, is nothing but variations in the form or structure of the Ultimate Reality. The diversity is just nominal, verbal.

Śwetaketu : Very well. But this Ultimate Reality has been described as a partless whole. The Vedas say "That Puruṣa, the Uncaused Principle, is both inside and outside, it is phaseless, motionless, quiescent, perfect, true, formless and effulgent". How can a partless entity be mutated into a variety of forms or structures?

Aaruṇi : True, the changeless does not change. The mutation is ideal and not real. It is like this. In the dimness of twilight passing through a forest walk you come across a coil of rope. You mistake it for a snake. You are scared, you shriek, shake and sweat. In fact you go through all the psychosomatic reactions which would have taken place at the sight of a genuine snake. Your erroneous idea has thus a pragmatic validity. But all the same the rope has not factually changed into a snake. The change occurred in your mind, you imagined the thing you saw to be snake. It is an illusion, — a subjective perversion of an objective content. All that happened was that your mind could not conceive the real nature of the object — it transformed the rope into a snake. Similarly the one Reality assumes various forms through misapprehension, a malposition of one entity on another. I have already said that the mutations are all nominal, the clay is the genuine stuff. In the same way "Sat", the principle of Reality is the "Constant" permeating through everything that we see, feel, touch or measure. It is both the ground and the content of all experience. The Constant is static, all the dynamism is in the illusory, the imagined variants. Therefore even during sense experience, the Idea of the Unitary principle remains as the true Essence of this Cosmic diversity. The idea of Becoming is informed by the idea of Being.

Śwetaketu : Tell me father how and why does this causal process of appearances take place?

Aaruṇi : That principle of Reality, the "Sat", contemplated, "I am One but I shall be many. I shall procreate the manifold." You will note that the "Sat" contemplated and willed. So It is a Conscious, Spiritual Principle and not an unconscious material principle, as the Sankhya School of thought holds. The process of manifestation, like the production of pots and pans from clay or the optical illusion of a snake on a rope, is thus an Act of Idea and Will. It is the objectification of Idea and Will.

Śwetaketu : If you take the analogy of rope snake illusion, the entire empirical world becomes non-existent, a chimera.

Aaruṇi : But why ? Reality is apprehended as something other than It is, through a sense of duality or plurality. The apprehension is not of any non-existent entity. This is the point I have been underlining all through. The Nyāya philosophers posit some principle other than "Sat", which according to them, was non-existent, prior to its generation. We have no such word as non-existent in our dictionary. To us every entity is Real, although conceived differently. Thus the rope is there, an existent, although apprehended as a snake. The clay is real and existent although variously apprehended and expressed as pots, pans, pitchers etc. Once the misconception disappears, the rope will be called a rope, and the clay will be called clay. The diversity of appearances is only nominal and relative, the Unitary Principle is Absolute. The process of manifestation is just a relativization of the Absolute. So once the idea of "Sat" is realized, all other ideas stemming from the variety of expressions denoting these mutations will vanish. This realization of Reality is ineffable, it shuts out all words, it switches off the mind even.

Aaruni : Having thus contemplated, It projected Itself into Fire (energy), the object that burns, digests, illumines and is red in colour, the principle of heat, light and energy. Fire then contemplated on Itself and willed that there should be more and so It mutated into Water. This is the principle of liquidity, coolness, mobility and is white in colour. When you use up a lot of energy and get heated, you sweat. Thus from common experience, it is obvious that water is caused by fire. Water meditated on itself and wished to multiply. And solid matter came out of it, generally denoted as earth but also called food. Crops like wheat, paddy, etc. grow on it. It is common experience that lands well served by rains yield bumper crops. Thus water causes food. Earth has mass and is dark in colour, static and the support of everything (*terra firma*).

Śwetaketu : Sir, fire or water or earth is unconscious matter — how could these principles contemplate or meditate ? Thought originates from fear of violence — in case of these objects, there could hardly be any such motive. Fear is the most fundamental urge to thought and action.

Aaruni : The Conscious Principle 'Sat' evolves into these material forms, in a regular order — so these evolved principles are figuratively said to have contemplated.

Śwetaketu : Well in that case thought may be figuratively attributed to the Original Principle 'Sat'.

Aaruni : No, 'Sat' is the Conscious Principle Itself. So why imagine that I was speaking figuratively when I said that It contemplated. I meant what I said.

Śwetaketu : If 'Sat' is the material Cause of the physical world, as clay is of earthenware, the inference that it is a material principle cannot be resisted. In this view it would be just unthinking matter like the *Pradhana* of the Sānkhya School. It is the evidence of order and design in the evolution of the physical world that might have led you to say that It contemplated. It may easily be a figurative expression. Don't we in common parlance, very often posit mental functions to material objects, in a figurative way ? For instance, standing on an eroding bank of a river, we often say that the bank wishes to fall into the river.

Aaruni : No. The Scriptures say that the Principle 'Sat' is Truth, It is Ātman (Self), the Spirit.

Śwetaketu : Oh but quite often non-self is figuratively termed as 'Self'. We often say 'my friend so and so is my very self'. Surely we do not literally mean it. Self has a very literal use.

Aaruni : But it has been enjoined that he who realizes Self is redeemed — so Self (Ātman) is never used in any figurative sense in the Veda.

(*To be continued*)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

'Swami Vivekananda and the building of Modern India' is the second instalment of the series by Swami Satswarupananda, a former Editor of *Prabuddha Bharata*.

'Prasthana Traya and Its Background,' is the sixth and final instalment of the series by Swami Vimalananda; the fifth instalment appeared in the July, 1963 number.

Dr. Anima Sen-Gupta is Reader in Philosophy, Patna University, Patna. In her article on 'Vācaspati Miśra and Vijñāna Bhikṣu on Bhoktṛbhava of Puruṣa,' she has excellently brought out how the Samkhya view has been interpreted by these two great commentators.

The article 'Swami Vivekananda and His Contribution to Vedanta' by Dr. C. D. Deshmukh, Vice-Chancellor, Delhi University, is adapted from his lecture at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi.

Sri M. P. Pandit of Sri Aurobindo Ashrama, Pondicherry is well-known to our readers as a great linguist, writer and reviewer. His article forms a review of the book of that title and has been published in an article form, as little is known about Milarepa, who is considered as a great poet-saint of Tibet.

Sri S. K. Gupta is Commissioner for Relief, Government of West Bengal, Calcutta. His article 'The Great Equation' is the second instalment; the first instalment appeared in July, 1963 number.

TEST BAN TREATY

In the sombre clouds, of stress, strife and cold war, that envelop the firmament of life on this planet at the present time, the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty which was signed between the great powers on August 5, 1963 is a silver lining of hope. Since that day many other countries have their accord substantiated by signing the treaty. Peoples of most of the countries have breathed a sigh of relief, for there was for sometime a real panic in their hearts when these tests — which contaminated the very atmosphere that man breathed—were being conducted. Protests and representations, by pacifists, as well as by people of other shades of opinion were made to the heads of the nuclear powers. Scientists all over the world were greatly perturbed as to what reaction the radioactive fallout would have on the health of the present generation, if the detonations of bombs of higher and higher power were continued. They feared that the future generations may be born deformed. Here is what a noted Soviet scientist, Prof. Vasily Yemelyanov said about it to a *TASS* correspondent: 'Denunciation of nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water puts an end once and for all to the danger of further contaminating these environments with radioactive fallout.

'This sort of contamination of the atmosphere during the past years alarmed greatly world public opinion. Many scientists have pointed out that the appearance of radioactive Strontium-90, Cesium-137 and Carbon, which accumulate in the bones and tissues of the organism, may have a disastrous influence not only on the health of the living, but cause irreparable damage to future generations.

'The ending of tests in the atmosphere eliminates this danger.' *

The test ban has been hailed as a major achievement of statecraft all over the world. Though one may not be too optimistic about it, as there has been no accord as to the complete elimination of nuclear war or restraint on stockpiling of the nuclear weapons, yet it is certainly a step in the right direction.

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* Quoted from the *News and Views from the Soviet Union*, news item dated August 22, 1963 from Moscow.

What are the implications of the treaty? The first and foremost is that, we can breathe almost in the same atmosphere as we did before the tests commenced, and that means a great thing. Secondly it goes to show that a sense of realism has dawned on the powers possessing the nuclear weapons. Thirdly a realization, that 'to live and let live' is the best way in all circumstances, if there was not to be a wholesale destruction of all that is in the world, has come. Fourthly, this treaty opens the door for further negotiations regarding disarmament and helps co-operation in the efforts to solve many other thorny problems that face the powers now. If we are not mistaken there is hope of a concord being arrived at between the communist countries and the Western powers, — who till now had been viewing each other with suspicion — regarding the solution of these problems though it may take its own time. Let us pray to God that good sense may prevail and save humanity from another war, which in the present context means a thermo-nuclear one and consequently disastrous.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

PHILOSOPHIES OF HISTORY: (*Meeting of East and West in Cycle-Pattern Theories of History*). G. E. Cairns. Pub. Philosophical Library, New York. Pages 496 + xxiii. Price $ 10.

As the title of the book itself suggests, the author elaborates the cycle theories as developed in East and in West and attempts to prove that "East and West have much in common in their views of the meaning, value and the goal of human history." The volume is divided into three parts and each part discusses in a detailed way the three sub-classes of the cyclic theory — the recurrent cosmic cycles theory, the one grand-cycle theory and the culture cycles theory. The writer gives a concise account of the ancient and modern theories in each case together with their social and philosophical background. In the first part is explained the cyclic theories as held by the Hindus, the Buddhists, the Jainas, the Chinese and the Greeks and the Romans. The cosmic dance of Shiva symbolizing the cyclic concept of time, the kalpas, the cycles of yugas, the implications of the Samkhya-Yoga, Advaita Vedanta, Taoism and Zen Buddhism in so far as they bear upon the cyclic pattern of time are explained clearly. The story from the *Brahmavaivarta Purana* narrated in the volume of Vishnu incarnating himself as a young Brahmin boy and describing the periodical creation and destruction of the universe gives us the clue to the Hindu cyclic theory. Sri Aurobindo and Dr Radhakrishnan uphold only the one-cycle theory. The same position in a modified form was upheld by the ancient Egyptians, the Hebrews and the early Christians. Though the modern Christians uphold the linear theory, Dr Cairns explains that scholars like Vico, Spengler, Sorokin and Toynbee take a very critical attitude towards the linear theory. To Vico history is a sociological science while Spengler speaks of a pattern in which our present or any particular culture is predetermined. Toynbee while rejecting the theory of repetitive and unending cycles nevertheless holds the spiral cyclic view and argues that history shows an upward direction in the development and progress of religions, especially Christianity.

The volume is very scholarly and gives the various facts in a masterly way which indicates the author's grasp of the subject. Dr Cairns is very sympathetic to the cyclic theories and argues that they are neither mythical nor fanciful and that they involve a profound symbolism. She especially emphasizes that the cyclical ideas are to a very great extent present in European thought also and that the goal and meaning of history is similar to both East and West. The author's endeavour is to show that a spiritual unity between East and West exists as applied to the ideas of the meaning and goals of cosmic and human history. As Prof. Sorokin observes in the preface the volume is a unique contribution to the historical and social sciences.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

TEACHINGS OF TIBETAN YOGA: By Garma C. C. Chang. Pub. University Books Inc. New York. P. 128. Price Five dollars.

One has always to be careful with books claiming to bring to light the occult tradition or the Tantric practices of the yogis in Tibet. Mostly they are based on second-hand information embellished with a liberal coating of fancy and fiction. But the works of Garma Chang are clearly not of that dubious variety. A scholar in Chinese, he has practised the Tibetan Yoga under traditional Gurus in that land of the Lamas and whatever he writes he does with a high sense of responsibility and imparts a genuine touch which only a person with direct acquaintance with the subject could give.

Is there one Tibetan Yoga or are there many? The fundamental Principle of the Tibetan Yoga is one though it takes different lines in working it out with different natures and varying equipments.

In this Thought the universe consists of dualities which are really inseparable unities. Each term of duality is intimately related to the other and to know one is to know the other also. An important application of this truth is in the realm of mind and *prana*. Their inter-relation is recognised in the Indian yogic tradition but the Tibetan adepts have carried the application of that knowledge to amazing lengths.

And Tibetan Tantrism develops its yoga on these twin bases of mind and *prana*. The path that bases itself on the purification, subtilisation and transformation of the mind is called the Mind-Yoga and the path that uses the life-energy for its means is the Energy-Yoga. The first is essentially psychological and it is sketched out by the author in his translations from works on the teaching and practice of *Mahamudra* in the first Part. The second consists of a series of complex yoga practices grouped into two stages: (1) Arising Yoga and (2) Perfecting Yoga. These interesting techniques for the achievement of Enlightenment through the skilful manipulation of *prana-sakti* are covered in the second Part containing renderings from treatises on *Six Yogas of Naropa*.

What is the teaching of Mahamudra? There is a Mind behind our mind. That Self-Mind is the great *Void* from which all emerges but which is stained by none. To become aware of that Illuminating Void and live in it is the first aim. The method is one of dispossession and relaxation in mind, life and body. As one lets things drop, ceases to cling to anything, the un-natural tension in the body-life-mind system gradually subsides into a quiescence. As this quiescence deepens by practice, the Self-Mind emerges in its vast Awareness of Void and the little surface organism is taken up into its Self-Nature, liberated.

There are three essentials in this Practice:

Equilibrium of the body by loosening it; of the mouth by slowing down the breathing; of the mind by not clinging to or relying on anything.

Relaxation which consists of loosening the mind, stripping it of all thought activity. When both the body and mind are thus loosened, one remains in a natural state.

Naturalness which lies in not making any kind of effort to take or leave; no effort is made to check or direct the senses and the mind; they are left just to themselves. One is spontaneous.

Thus, "the essence of equilibrium is not to cling, the essence of relaxation is not to hold, the essence of naturalness is to make no effort."

It is emphasised repeatedly that there shall not be too much of effort, too much of strain, for they 'hinder that spontaneity and freedom of spirit, without which it is difficult to unfold the vast and liberating Mind. One should therefore never forget to practise the "looseness", "vastness", and "spontaneity".'

The practice of the Six Yogas* as outlined in the second part of the book is too technical to be covered in a brief study as this. Suffice it to say that they are mostly enlarged applications of the Indian tantric knowledge of the human system, especially the Chakras, the dynamic role of the Kundalini moving in the Sushumna, and the method of dissolving the tattvas step by step until one arrives at the Ultimate. Generation of internal heat, Dumos, in the navel centre and direction of the life-energy through the Central Channel, up and down, preservation and sublimation of the *bindu*, the Tig Le, purification of Nadis, conquest of the life-breath, different kinds of visualisation as a process of the dissolution of the various parts of the being in their universal and transcendental sources, are some of the main aspects of this six-fold Yoga. The notes provided by the thoughtful author are a most helpful feature of his writings and do great credit to his accurate scholarship. A profound work to be read and re-read by all serious students of Yoga.

M. P. PANDIT.

THE RESURGENCE OF INDIA: By K. P. S. Menon. Publications Division, Govt. of India. Pp. 55. Price Re. 1.

In these three addresses—comprising the Patel Memorial Lectures for 1962—Sri Menon traces the changes undergone by the Indian people during the last hundred years on the political, social, cultural and economic fronts. Incidentally he compares these developments with those in China and shows how the Communist leadership in that country has thrown overboard a mature civilization 2,500 years old and is now in the throes of a revolution which is not yet complete. India, points out the author, has been able to escape the shock and blood-letting of a revolution due to three factors: a deep rooted spiritual culture, enlightened leadership beginning with Ram Mohan Roy and ending with Mahatma Gandhi, and the fact that the British rather than the Dutch or the Portuguese were our masters during our decadence.

The talks are full of brilliant observations, delightful asides and instructive peeps into the lives of notable personalities like Tolstoy, Churchill etc., and make for a happy, profitable reading.

M. P. PANDIT.

THREE PROPHETS: By T. L. Vaswani. Pub.: Gita Pub. House, Connaught Road, Poona-1. Pp. 47. Price 0.75 nP.

This is a collection of three essays by the saint-author on Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Guru Gobind Singh and Swami Vivekananda. Throughout, the writer stresses on one common feature of their Teaching illustrated in their own lives, the oneness of all life in the Divine. *To love is to live.* Love for fellow-men developing into love for the Divine, Love for the Divine expressing itself in compassion and sympathy for all creatures, is the key-note of their Teaching.

The treatment is simple and appealing.

M. P. PANDIT.

THE BIG IDOL: By Richard B. Gregg. Pub.: Navajivan Pub. House, Ahmedabad-14. Pp. 72. Price 0.75 nP.

The author, a thinker of consequence on social and economic questions, discusses the varied role money has come to play in the present-day society. It has become a means of exchange, means of measure and means of storage. Due to this combination of values in one item, i.e. money, it has been playing a totally disproportionate role in human dealings. How far it is possible to remedy this state of affairs, where we can make a beginning by the adoption of *scrips* as once tried in Europe with conspicuous success, are questions discussed by Mr Gregg in this reasoned exposition.

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* Heat Yoga, Illusory Body Yoga, Dream Yoga, Light Yoga, Bardo Yoga and Transformation Yoga.

M. P. PANDIT.

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(1) THE LAW & THE LAWYERS: By M. K. Gandhi. Compiled & Edited by S. B. Kher. Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad-14. Pp. 246. Price Rs. 3.

(2) TWO MEMORABLE TRIALS OF MAHATMA GANDHI. Compiled & Edited by R. K. Prabhu. Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad-14. Pp. 86. Price Rs. 1.25.

Mahatmaji had spent a considerable part of his life as a lawyer, and the first book recounts the various incidents in connection therewith: his efforts to exercise his calling in strict adherence to his ethical principles are recounted here, in his own words, with copious extracts from his autobiography. Incidentally his legal training had also enabled him to be quick and apt in reasoning, and a formidable opponent in argument. He took to law less as a source of livelihood than as a medium for installing a passion for truth and Ahimsa and for public service and public good. And it is a tribute both to him, and the innate noble ideals of the profession itself that his call for sacrifice and suffering should have attracted the cream of Indian legal talent.

As a lawyer, Gandhiji was of the view that his duty was always 'to place before the Judge the truth not to prove the guilty as innocent'.

The book is replete with instances when Gandhiji had condemned injustice and oppression in any form.

The second treatise is a record of two trials which Gandhiji had had to face in his political career, one for sedition and the other for contempt of court. Both of them reveal the innate dignity and the absolute fearlessness which the Mahatma had exhibited in upholding his cherished principles.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

VILLAGE SWARAJ: By M. K. Gandhi. Compiled by H. M. Vyas. Navajivan Press, Ahmedabad-14. Pp. 268. Price Rs. 3.

'Swaraj' is a vedic word and Gandhiji would define it as connoting self-rule and self-restraint, 'not freedom from all restraint which independence often means'. Such an ideal must begin in the villages in India. Gandhiji was convinced that true freedom for India and the world would be attained only by living in villages wherein only truth and non-violence could be realized.

His own ideal portrayed with infinite care and detail in these pages covers every aspect of life and prescribes a non-exploiting decentralized, simple village economy, providing full employment to all on the basis of voluntary co-operation, attaining self-sufficiency in food, clothing, medical facilities and other necessities of life. Every village worker, he pleaded, must have a knowledge of the general principles of health. He would accord a honoured place to women. Suppression of women, he said, would be a denial of ahimsa. Every village worker should therefore look upon them with respect. (224).

Gandhiji thus summed up his gospel: 'The individual being pure, sacrifices himself for the family, the latter for the village, the village for the district, the district for the province, the province for the nation, the nation for all.' (p. 250).

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

PROBLEMS OF UNDER DEVELOPED ECONOMY: By Dr D. S. Nag. Pub.: Lakshmi Narain Agarwal, Agra. Pp. 463. Price Rs. 18.

The urge for economic growth in various countries of the world is a known fact. Immediately after the attainment of political freedom in most of these countries, particularly in Asia, a passionate desire for economic development is also seen. The oppressed countries, that were so long exploited, now want to give up their worn-out economic outlook and gain instead a modern vigour of social and collective welfare through some determined, progressive and planned method. For that, the present development of the science of Economics and its growing conception of welfare is ready enough to help these nations.

It is on this theme of economic development of these under developed countries, the learned author of this book has reflected. The nature of this work can be easily understood by the fact that it is based on the author's thesis for D.Litt. approved by the Agra University. And the motive that initiated the author to study the problems of under developed economy, as expressed in the preface is that — apart from the Western and official approach towards the study of these problems of under developed economy — an impartial and integrated observation of the whole situation by some independent expert is necessary.

Encouraged by this idea Dr Nag has re-examined almost all the major issues of important economic consideration within this single book. No doubt this discussion is presented in a very clear and lucid style, in all its ramifications, practical as well as theoretical. Being independent of any doctrine or school of economics, the author's opinion has always been cautious and rational. Secondly, throughout the book, a balanced view of mixed economy has been logically upheld. Lastly, the author's presentation of comparative facts and datas from different official and non-official sources, and his deep probe into the factors that stand as obstacles on the way of a growing under developed economy and its proper take-off, is highly commendable. His chapters on 'Basic characteristics of under developed economy', 'Mobilization of capital', and a critical discussion on Marx's, Schempeter's and Keynes' opinions about under developed countries in the chapter, 'An analysis of the Theories of Development', deserve special mention for the masterly treatment therein.

BR. SUDHANGSU.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SUMMER SEMINAR AT THE VIVEKANANDA COTTAGE, THOUSAND ISLAND PARK, NEW YORK.

1963

This was the fourth consecutive year Swami Nikhilananda conducted a Seminar during the summer at the Vivekananda Cottage, Thousand Island Park. In the Seminar of two weeks from August 11 to 24, 1963, the *Mundaka Upanishad* was expounded for about two hours every morning from 10.00 a.m. The average attendance was twenty-four. In the afternoon students joined the prayer and meditation in the room where Swami Vivekananda had stayed during the summer of 1895. They came to the park from various places of the East, and one from as distant a place as Hawaii. In this little village people have learnt to notice this sudden influx of people as a normal and welcome annual occurrence.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

VEDANTA SOCIETY OF NEW YORK

The Vedanta Society of New York celebrated the Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda during the Centenary Year by holding special lectures, classes and worship services appropriate to the occasion.

The main worship service was held on January 17, 1963, the day of Swami Vivekananda's Birth Anniversary. A special one-hour worship in the morning, starting at 8.00, consisted of meditation, prayer, scriptural chants, and devotional songs. In the evening, a vesper service was performed in the chapel, accompanied by music. The day's functions concluded with an informal gathering, after dinner, in the library, when several members discussed with Swami Pavitrananda topics relating to Swamiji and his works.

On Sunday, January 20, 1963 was held the public celebration of Swamiji's birthday, when Swami Pavitrananda conducted the Service in the Society's chapel. The subject of his talk was 'Swami Vivekananda—Flaming Spirit of Vedanta'. He described the life and fiery message of Swami Vivekananda in a vivid way. Swamiji's portrait was tastefully decorated. Two Indian songs—one in Sanskrit and the other in Bengali—were sung by Dr A. S. Chakravarty, a scientist from India.

On April 26, 1963 the annual 'Members' Dinner' was held, wherein was featured a special programme as a tribute to Swamiji in connection with his Centenary.

On June 18, 1963 Swami Sarvagatananda, Head of the Vedanta Societies of Boston and Providence, came on special invitation and addressed the congregation on 'Swami Vivekananda: His Love for Humanity'.

The Fourth of July, associated with the hallowed memory of Swami Vivekananda's Mahasamadhi, has, since 1962, been observed in a very special manner by the members of the Vedanta Society of New York. Swami Pavitrananda and over fifty members of the Society drove to a pretty mountain-top site owned by two of the members, situated at Moss Hill, Putnam County, New York State. Photographs of Sri Ramakrishna and Holy Mother, and a bronze-tone portrait of Swami Vivekananda were placed on well-decorated altars. The programme of the day was joyously observed, beginning with the recitation of Swamiji's poem 'To the Fourth of July'. This was followed by a dramatic reading of Vivekananda's lecture 'Yajnavalkya and Maitreyi'. After this, there was a recitation of another poem of Swamiji, 'The Living God'. The programme closed with congregational singing of hymns and profitable discussions among the members on the message of Swami Vivekananda.

Swami Vivekananda is particularly remembered and honoured throughout the Centenary Year, every Tuesday evening, during the weekly class, when Swami Pavitrananda gives a series of special talks on 'Studies in Swami Vivekananda'.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION HOME OF SERVICE VARANASI

REPORT FOR 1961-62

The Ramakrishna Mission Home of Service, conducts an Indoor General Hospital, an Outpatients' Department, it also aids the aged and invalid men, women and helpless ladies. The total number of indoor cases admitted during the period under review was 2,628. The total number of surgical cases was 688. The Outpatients' Department treated 71,474 new cases and 1,96,003 repeated cases and 4,270 surgical cases. 102 persons received monthly pecuniary help. 9 men and 22 women invalids were given refuge. Milk was distributed to 648 persons. The income for the year under the General Funds was Rs. 1,55,525.05 and the expenditure Rs. 1,62,740.14 leaving a deficit of 7,215.09. The Managing Committee conveys its sincere and grateful thanks to the Central and State Governments, subscribers, donors, doctors, friends and sympathisers and appeals for funds to meet its requirements besides the recurring expenses, and deficit.

.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
Swami Vivekananda

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PANCADAŚĪ

अध्येतृवर्गमध्यस्थपुत्राध्ययन शब्दवत् । भानेऽप्यभानं भानस्य प्रतिबन्धेन युज्यते ॥ १२ ॥

Adhyetravarga, a group of chanters of the Vedas; *madhyastha,* stationed in the midst of; *putrasya,* son's; *adhyayana śabdavat,* like the sound of chanting; *bhāné api,* though experienced; *abhānam,* (is) non-cognizable. *Bhānasya,* of experience; *pratibandhena,* due to obstruction; (*apratitiḥ,* non-cognition); *yujyaté,* is proper.

[Note : Two doubts are being answered in this verse. First is that one does not experience and not experience the Supreme blissfulness simultaneously. Secondly that this statement is against all reasoning.]

12. Just as one cannot distinctly find out one's son's voice from among a group of Vedic chanters, so also though the bliss of the Atman is experienced, it is not clearly cognizable. Because of the impediments, the obstructions, this non-cognition is but proper.

प्रतिबन्धोऽस्ति भातीति व्यवहारार्हवस्तुनि । तन्निरस्य विरुद्धस्य तस्योत्पादनमुच्यते ॥ १३ ॥

Asti, exists; *bhāti,* shines; *iti,* of this kind; *vyavahāra,* transactions, dealings; *arha,* fit; *vastuni,* in things; *tat,* that; *nirasya,* denying; *viruddhasya,* of the contrary; *tasya,* of that; *utpādanam,* creation; *pratibandha,* obstruction; *ucyate,* is said (to be).

[Note : What are the impediments, that is being stated.]

13. Denying existence and manifestation to things fit to be accepted as such and accepting contrary notions regarding such things are the obstructions (to our proper cognition).[1]

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[1] Example of this type is seeing the snake in the rope. The rope is denied and the snake is superimposed, for actually the rope does not become the snake, when it is seen as the snake.

तस्य हेतुः समानाभिहारः पुत्रध्वनिश्रुतौ । इहानादिरविद्यैव व्यामोहैकनिबन्धनम् ॥ १४ ॥

Putradhwani, son's voice; *śrutau,* in hearing; *tasya,* the obstruction; *samānābhihāraḥ,* the collective chanting; *hetuḥ,* the cause. *Iha,* in this case; *vyāmoha,* contrary knowledge ; *eka*, chief ; *nibandhanam*, cause ; *anādi*, beginningless ; *avidyā*, ignorance ; *eva*, alone.

[NOTE : An example was cited in the twelfth verse to explain how an obstruction acts to prevent clear perception. In this verse the analogy is further explained.]

14. In the analogy (cited in verse 12) the cause of not hearing the son's voice separately and distinctively is the collective chanting whereas in this case (of non-experiencing of the bliss of the Ātman) the cause is beginningless ignorance, which is chiefly instrumental in projecting contrary knowledge.

[NOTE : In the following verse the author of *Pancadaśī* speaks about *prakṛti* which is the root cause of *avidyā*, ignorance, which latter again has been pointed out as the obstruction to proper perception.]

चिदानन्दमयब्रह्मप्रतिविम्बसमन्विता । तमोरजस्सत्वगुणा प्रकृतिर्द्विविधा च सा ॥ १५ ॥

Chidānandamayabrahma, Brahman, who is Existence, Knowledge, Bliss Absolute ; *pratibimba*, reflection ; (of), *samanvitā*, conjoined with ; *tamorajassatvagunā*, made up of the three gunas, tamas, rajas and sattva ; *prakṛti* ; *sā*, it ; *ca*, and ; *dwividhā*, of two types.

15. That which is made up of three gunas — sattva, rajas, and tamas — and is in conjunction with the reflection of Brahman, who is Existence, Knowledge, Bliss Absolute is called prakṛti. And that Prakṛti is of two types.

सत्वशुद्ध्यविशुद्धिभ्यां मायाऽविद्ये च ते मते । मायाविंबो वशीकृत्य तां स्यात्सर्वज्ञ ईश्वरः ॥ १६ ॥

Sattva, (of) the shining principe ; *śuddhi*, integrity to remain unclouded by other gunas ; *avisuddhi*, propensity to be obscured by other gunas ; *māyā*, *avidyā ca té maté*, they are respectively called *māyā* and *avidyā*. *Māyābimbaḥ*, the reflection of Brahman in māyā ; *tām*, her (*māyā*) ; *vaśīkṛtya*, controlling ; *sarvajnaḥ*, omniscient ; *īśwaraḥ*, God with attributes ; *syāt*, becomes.

16. According as the shining principle's (*sattva*) integrity to remain unclouded (*śuddha*) and its propensity to be obscured by other *guṇas*, these two divisions of *prakṛti* are called *māyā* and *avidyā* respectively.* The reflection of Brahman, in the predominantly pure principle (*śuddhasatva pradhāna*) of *māyā*, controlling *māyā* becomes Īśwara.

* The two divisions of *prakṛti* told in the previous verse are being described here. They are, one of the nature of predominantly pure principle (*śuddhasattwa*), which is called *māyā* ; and the other with predominantly obscurable shining principle (*malinasattwa*) which is called *avidyā*.

अविद्यावशगस्त्वन्यस्तद्वैचित्र्यादनेकधा । सा कारणशरीरं स्यात्प्राज्ञस्तत्राभिमानवान् ॥ १७ ॥

Avidyāvaśagaḥ, the one that is under the sway of *avidyā* ; *tu*, but (becomes) ; *anyaḥ*, jīva. *Tadvaicitryāt*, due to its (of ignorance) difference (in denseness) or variety in forms ; (jīva) ; *anekadhā*, is of varied types. *Sā*, that (*avidyā*) ; *kāraṇaśarīram*, causal body ; *syāt*, becomes. *Tatra*, in that ; *abhimānavān*, one who feels his ego ; *prājñaḥ*, (is called) *prājña*.

17. The other[1] (reflection) that is under the sway of *avidyā* becomes jīva. But these jīvas are of various types due to the difference in denseness of ignorance and variety in their forms.[2] That *avidyā* becomes the causal body (of the jīva) and the jīva who feels its ego in that causal body is called *prājña*.

[1] The reflection of Brahman in *avidyā* which comes under its control is jīva.

[2] The variety of forms being : gods, men, animals, etc.

WHAT IS MAYA?

Appearance and Reality

Often we are confronted with this term Māyā and more often than not has it been misconstrued and misinterpreted. It has been translated as illusion in English and this has given rise to all the confusion. But, for an impartial observer and thinker all this need not necessarily be so. He sees almost a parallel between the scientific theories of today and Māyā.

Take for instance the first proposition of the doctrine of Māyā: viz. that appearance is not reality. It appears real because something else which forms its substratum is real. This is also what science tells us. Let us take some concrete examples instead of beating about the bush in a maze of words. What revolutionary changes have not the common conceptions, regarding ordinary phenomena, undergone! A thousand years ago people accepted the world as a flat piece of surface and there were very queer ideas regarding how it was held in position. Do we believe in such stuff now? If anyone does he will be considered as coming from the neolithic age, though modern science is not so old as that. It was only when Columbus, who said that he could reach India going round the world, if the other route was not available and when he did succeed to a certain extent, that there was some sort of belief in the statement that the world was round.

Again, we say the sun rises in the east and sets in the west. Even now this phraseology has not changed, but does the sun go round the earth as it appears to the ordinary eye. No, says the scientist. It is the earth that is moving round the sun, as also on its own axis. This latter rotation produces the night and the day, whereas the former movement the seasons. Another wonderful theory or fact, whatever you may like to call it, of science is that our earth is moving at a tremendous velocity on its own axis — the rate is approximately 17.5 miles per minute. Yet we do not feel the impact of such a speed. For us the earth seems to be stationary. Then there are many other things than these which very powerful telescopes and a practised eye at that alone could find out. For instance it was recently discovered by 'Soviet and American astronomers simultaneously and independently that one of the most distant visible galaxies, 3C-273, is changing in brilliance.'

'The spectrum of 3C-273 shows that it is receding from us at about 30,000 miles a second — hundreds of times faster than any stars in our own galaxy could possibly be moving — hence its identification as a galaxy.

'"Hitherto variable radiation has been observed only in stars and no one has even suspected that galaxies, too, can change their brilliance."

'The mass of this mysterious space colossus must be millions of times greater than the mass of our Sun.

'The very existence of such superstars was regarded as impossible until very recently.'[1]

We can go on piling up evidence to prove that what people fondly believed once about the world had to be discarded and new faiths, formulated according to scientific theories, were to be cultivated. But our purport being to show that the world cannot be taken as it appears even from the standpoint of science, these few illustrations must suffice. The doctrine of Māyā does not demand any more than this recognition: that appearance has a conditional existence and when the condition varies the existence also undergoes a change, in short, it is not eternally real.

Māyā as Ignorance

Before going into the nature of Māyā let us see how it has been generally construed. Māyā is described by one of the Upaniṣads, as

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[1] Quoted from the *Soviet Weekly*, August 1, 1963. Published from 3, Rosary Gardens, London, S.W. 7.

prakṛti and the wielder of Māyā as Īśwara.[2] It is also called ignorance. Ignorance need not necessarily always mean the absence of worldly wisdom or of material sciences. One may be ignorant of all these, yet aware of his true nature which is the real wisdom. Whereas another may have known many sciences yet be ignorant of what he really is. The latter wisdom leads to material welfare and the former to spiritual emancipation, which is everlasting and endowing peace.

Here we face some knotty questions. Whose is this ignorance? Whence does it come? How can the effulgent One, the Ātman, be covered by this ignorance? Is not then Māyā more powerful than the Ātman? Let us take these questions one by one. The ignorance, says the Vedantist, is of two types, one is the primaeval Māyā having recourse to which Īśwara projects this world; and the other, which controlling jīva binds him to the world. So there is Māyā in Īśwara, which is His own power, and ignorance in the jīva. This ignorance is therefore of the jīva. We now come to the second question: From where does this ignorance come if the Ātman is self-effulgent consciousness or Knowledge Absolute? The Vedantist's proposition that appeals to reason is: that this ignorance is without beginning. Or as Swamiji says: 'Truth never dreams . . . Illusion arises from illusion alone.' No satisfactory answer can be obtained to this question so long as one is in the realm of Māyā. This is true not only of Māyā but of the world as well, which again according to the Vedantist is nothing but Māyā. One does not know wherefrom this universe came into being and in what it is sustained. This statement may seem absurd to many, as so much has been discovered about it by the scientists. But we forget that science deals only with things which have already come into being, of perceivable objects, or to tell it briefly, objects which come under the purview of the senses. They cannot say what was there before creation, may be billions of years ago. Yet again scientists cannot think of a time when there was no creation. That is, they work in time, in space and in terms of causality. When they can go beyond these then only can they come to know from whence this creation came into being. Swami Vivekananda pertinently and categorically sets down, 'No amount of knowledge of the external world could solve the problem (of the mystery of the universe). "But," says the scientist, "we are just beginning to know a little. Wait a few thousand years and we shall get the solution." "No," says the Vedantist, for he has proved beyond all doubt that the mind is limited, that it cannot go beyond certain limits — beyond time, space and causation. As no man can jump out of his own self, so no man can go beyond the limits that have been put upon him by the laws of time and space. Every attempt to solve the laws of causation, time and space, would be futile because the very attempt would have to be made by taking for granted the existence of these three.' These modes of thought according to time, space and causation is what the Vedantin calls Māyā.

Sri Ramakrishna on Māyā

Sri Ramakrishna in his inimitable simple way described Māyā as 'lust and lucre'. Let us see how far this statement goes along with the traditional view of Māyā and how far it agrees in the practical field of life. The Vedantist says that Māyā binds the jīva to the world, and that is exactly the work of lust — lust for power, for enjoyment and for wealth. That this is so has been proved over and over again. That is why all teachers of mankind enjoined upon a true spiritual aspirant to renounce these, if he wanted release from this bondage. Analyse the motives behind any action of any individual placed anywhere in the world. Is there anyone, — except, of course, those who have gone beyond worldly attachment — whose motive cannot be classified under these divisions. If we probe into the motive of an individual who murders, robs or cheats, or a nation which trespasses, overrides or overruns its neighbouring states we will surely find that it falls under one of these categories. Religion, however, is not in exercising our power to enjoy but to overcome the strong urge to do so. This simple definition of Sri Ramakrishna is so apt, and at the same time so completely clears the cobwebs of confusion that had gathered round this word Māyā that it looks too simple to be true. But as Swamiji remarks, 'Truths of life are most simple,' but we cannot understand them at once because of their simplicity. Again, this definition does not contradict in the least the Vedantic meaning of Māyā, viz. power to veil the real and present the unreal as the real. For is it not infatuation of the unreal that drags man into the whirlpool of this world? This will be clear if we quote Sri Ramakrishna again where he says, 'Attachment to one's relatives is Māyā.' The whole world knows how powerful this pull is.

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[2] मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यान्मायिनं तु महेश्वरम् ।

Svetasvataropanishad, 4. 10.

Swami Vivekananda on Māyā

Swamiji further illustrates this same idea of Sri Ramakrishna when he says, 'Māyā is a simple statement of facts — what we are and what we see around us.' He does not merely peremptorily remark and ask us to believe or leave the rest to our imagination. He substantiates this statement with illustrations. He takes the tremendous fact of death and remarks: 'The whole world is going towards death; everything dies. All our progress, our vanities, our reforms, our luxuries, our wealth, our knowledge, have that one end — death. That is all that is certain. Cities come and go, empires rise and fall, planets break into pieces and crumble into dust, to be blown about by the atmospheres of other planets. Thus it has been going on from time without beginning. Death is the end of everything. Death is the end of life, of beauty, of wealth, of power, of virtue, too. Saints die and sinners die, kings die and beggars die. They are all going to death, and yet this tremendous clinging on to life exists. Somehow, we do not know why, we cling to life; we cannot give it up. And this is Māyā.' Further he points out how, 'the least amount of material prosperity that we enjoy is elsewhere causing the same amount of misery.'

Swamiji then goes on to depict forcefully the fact of the universe: How though like a seesaw, alternating between misery and happiness, it enchants man and holds him down in its grip. 'This,' he says, 'is Māyā.' For a bit of happiness a load of misery is suffered patiently. Nature makes us work like an ox attached to the grinding mill. With a wisp of straw dangling in front and attached to the yoke the ox is tempted and it moves on and on but never reaches the coveted straw. So too are we employed to plough the nature's fields and grind the nature's mill and still think that we will one day overcome this nature. This is Māyā.

Another fallacious argument which man is always prone to is: that he is progressing towards good, and that a time will come when it will be all good and no evil. If that were so, why are there an increasing number of law-courts and ever increasing number of law-suits? Why are there so many police posses, so many anti-corruption squads, and then again the security police, the plain-clothes men and so on? Is this the sign of lessening of evil? No doubt, man of the present age compared with the man of the forest has considerably improved towards good, as also in his power to do good. But from the above it is also clear that in that very proportion evil too has increased. Still we do not believe it and this is Māyā.

This world is a place of contradictions. It is at best Tantalus's hell, and yet we do not recognise it as such, for when we know it we would like to get out of it. We cannot add a drop more to the happiness of the world without adding misery to it in the same proportion. We may be asked here whether it is wrong to do good. No one will say that. But we have to remember that all this doing good is only for one's own edification. We *must* do good, for that is the way to avoid evil; only let us not do so with the idea that we will be able to wipe out all the misery from this world. For as Swami Vivekananda says, 'It is like chronic rheumatism. Drive it out from the legs, it will go to the head.' We have thus seen, how Swamiji's idea on Māyā, far from being contradictory to his Master's, explains it more fully and therefore is at the same time in no way a deviation from the traditional meaning. He has only cleared the labyrinth and put it in plain language so that even an ordinary man, not brought up in the tradition, can also understand and assimilate it.

Is Māyā endless?

When the Vedantist says that Māyā is without beginning, does it not, as a natural corollary, follow that it will have no end? Vedanta does not leave these doubts in the lurk: It says, 'No, Māyā can be ended.' This position of Vedanta will be clear when we discuss the nature of Māyā. For the present let us accept it as a working hypothesis. If this statement of Vedanta is accepted then liberation which is the goal of human life becomes an assured fact. Māyā ceases to have influence on the individual when he sees himself in his own true form, that of Sat-Cit-Ananda. And this seeing is liberation according to any known concept, though a little modified here or mended there in conformity with the individuals' leanings. What if we maintain that Māyā being without beginning must also be endless? Then there is no point in striving for liberation: in that case the individual soul cannot go beyond Māyā, which is the criterion of liberation.

How does Māyā or Ignorance cover the Self-Effulgent Ātman?

This brings us to the third question: If the Ātman is said to be Knowledge Absolute how can ignorance cloud it? We shall answer this by a familiar example. Let us take the sun, which is a luminous body. It is obscured by the presence of clouds in the atmosphere and according as the density of the clouds is thick or thin the sun is partially seen or totally unseen. It may be, we may not be able to see it for days together. How do we account for it? The clouds are after all not so vast as the sun, yet they do cover it in a particular area. It may be here objected, that the simile is out of place and not a proper comparison, on the ground that the sun is far away and the clouds are very near compared to the distance of the sun whereas it is not the case with the Ātman. The Ātman is one's own being. Yes, says the Vedantist, though it is near it appears very far being tainted by the clouds of attachment to things, like the body, other than the Ātman. That is why the Upaniṣads say, 'It is far; It is the inmost; It is inside everything as well as outside of all these.'[3] So it is not a fancy nor a groundless, parallelless argument to say that ignorance clouds the self-effulgent One. Now, when the above answers have been thoroughly grasped, it is easy to know what to expect for the fourth one. If Māyā or ignorance can be ended, how can it be more powerful than the Ātman? We have let ourselves be tarnished and are weeping, or as Swamiji says: 'We put our hands before our eyes and weep that it is dark. Take the hands away and there is light; the light exists always for us, the self-effulgent nature of the human soul.'

Māyā as Name and Form

We spoke of Māyā as ignorance. What is meant by this is explained by an Upaniṣadic passage. 'All the forms and names are only play of words, the clay (the substance) alone is real.'[4] Our ignorance is about this substance. We take the name and form to be real. And this is what deludes us. The Upaniṣad gives us three instances: of clay, of gold and of iron. The Upaniṣad says that whatever the forms that a substance has been changed into or by whatever the names they are called, they have no existence apart from the substance. Pots, pans and pitchers which are made of clay can have no existence except in and through clay, the substance. The necklaces, bangles and rings of gold can have no existence separate from gold. 'We can never see name, form or causes standing by themselves. This phenomenon is Māyā,' says Swamiji. As it is in the world of matter so also it is with the universe — whether man, beast, sun, moon or stars, it is all name and form while the true substance is only One. When the names and forms are destroyed what remains is only that Eternal Spirit, Ātman, Brahman. This name and form brings in duality and thus creates delusion. It is the ignorance of the substance, of which the universe is only a distorted vision, that brings in all delusion. Now the question is how does the infinite Spirit become finite. We dealt with this question earlier in a different context but it bears repetition here. Vedanta says this duality is only an appearance, in reality it is Non-dual.[5] When we look through Māyā, through time, space and causation, the Infinite appears to have become the finite. And as long as one remains in this field of time and space one cannot but see many and be deluded. This is a statement of fact and we see how beautifully Swamiji's definition of Māyā, as a statement of facts, fits in here.

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[3] तद्दूरे तद्वन्तिके तदन्तरस्य सर्वस्य तदु सर्वस्यास्य बाह्यतः । *Isa U.* 5.

[4] वाचारंभणं विकारो नामधेयं मृत्तिकेत्येव सत्यम् । *Chandogya,* 6.1.4.

Again, for all practical purposes we see nature acting. It produces the day and the night, the greenery and the desert, the turmoils in man's mind and the upheavals in the galaxies. This is a tremendous force and we feel the impact of it every day of our life. Yet, says the Vedantist, the way for liberation, freedom is not with nature but against it. Our very life is a fight against nature. Swamiji observes: 'We are not born as helpers of nature, but competitors with nature. We are its bond-masters, but we bind ourselves down. Why is this house here? Nature did not build it. Nature says go and live in the forest. Man says I will build a house and fight with nature, and he does so. The whole history of humanity is a continuous fight against the so-called laws of nature, and man gains in the end.' This is so even in the internal world. 'Man,' continues Swamiji, 'as it were, cuts his way out of nature to freedom.' This nature, which is a statement of facts has been described in Vedanta as Māyā. Now we see that it matters little by what name it is called, ignorance, nature or Māyā, the power is the same. We are in it; we do not know how we came into it but we live in it. All our thinking and all our action are in it.

Nature of Māyā

What is the nature of this Māyā which is so powerful a force? And what is the way out of it? Māyā, also called *avyakta* is the Lord's power. It is without beginning; is made up of the three *guṇas* — sattva, rajas and tamas, and is superior to the effects. It can be inferred by the wise only by the effect it produces. And it is this Māyā that projects the world, says Śri Śankara in his *Vivekachudamani*.[6] Continuing he describes its nature thus: 'It is neither existent nor non-existent nor of the characteristic of both.'[7] It is not existent as it can be destroyed by the Knowledge of Brahman, just as the rope in the snake seen in the dark is no more existent when light flashes upon it and the rope becomes known. It is not non-existent because it projects all the differences, and can be inferred from the effects it produces. It cannot be of both characteristics because such a thing is an incongruity. By the play of its *guṇas* Māyā throws a veil, as it were, on the Real substance and apparently distorts It to look like divergent things. There is a beautiful parable of Sri Ramakrishna which explains the nature of Māyā: 'A priest was once going to the village of a disciple of his. He had no servant with him. Seeing a cobbler on the way, he

(*Continued on Page* 441)

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[5] मायामात्रमिदं द्वैतमद्वैतं परमार्थतः ॥

Mandukyakarika, 1.17

[6] अव्यक्तनाम्नी परमेशशक्तिरनाद्यविद्या
त्रिगुणात्मिका परा ।
कार्यानुमेया सुधियैव माया यया जगत्सर्वमिदं
प्रसूयते ॥ 108 ॥

[7] सन्नाप्यसन्नाप्युभयात्मिका नो ॥ *Ibid.*, 109.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE BUILDING OF MODERN INDIA

(Continued from the previous issue)

SWAMI SATSWARUPANANDA

The social authorities at the time of and previous to the advent of Swami Vivekananda viewed the problem of preserving the purity of women in a wrong perspective. To them the weakening of the bodies of women appeared as 'purity or vigour'. And they preferred purity at the cost of vigour. Thus inviting weakness they lost purity also. The forward of the Swami's time, following the dialectic, went to the other extreme of discarding all restrictions. Their idea was not to introduce vigour in place of purity, the factor of vigour did not strike them; they had it to preserve purity. They did away with child marriage and the restriction on widow-remarriage. They introduced education too — the sort of education their boys were getting. In their enthusiasm for reforms they could not even see what baneful effects the new education was producing on their boys. The Swami's discerning eyes saw through the defects of both; and the dialectic being ready for the synthesis he spoke of a different type of education and kept almost silent on child marriage or widow-marriage; his idea being that education would automatically solve the other two problems.

Knowing full well the immense responsibility that would devolve on the shoulders of the newly educated ladies, in the task of building new India, the Swami wanted to get the proper type of teachers. He found, however, that though the ideal characters were there in India itself the intellectual qualification necessary for the task was lacking. In the West he searched for such teachers. Intellects were there in plenty but they would not serve the purpose. They must dedicate their lives to the cause of India and they must accept Indian culture as a whole. U.K. and U.S.A. gave one such soul each — Sister Nivedita and Sister Christine, one noted for her brilliant intellect and power of observation, the other for her gentleness and sweetness. Christine, being gentle had not to fight so hard with herself, as Nivedita's rebellious Irish blood had to, in order to adapt herself to the new environments and culture. But Christine remained a tutor, Nivedita became the most valiant champion of the Indian cause in all its aspects. She was the leader of leaders in the Revolutionary movement of Bengal and set an ideal, after the manner of Rani of Jhansi, to the future Indian womanhood; she taught women their duties in periods of national crisis. Having procured two ideal teachers, the Swami got a girls' school started by Nivedita on the same day as the Belur Math, headquarters of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission, saw the light of day. This shows what importance he laid on the education of the women of the land.

What was the type of education that the Swami wanted to impart to our women? Girls' education should be conducted almost on the same line as the boys', which has been discussed in the previous section. There is of course to be a difference: women should not be men or men women. Mannish women and womanish men are an abhorrence which should be fought against. The Swami himself spoke of the eternal ideals of Indian womanhood in the last paragraph of his famous book, *Modern India*. Sita, Savitri, Damayanti are held up there as India's immortal women who are perpetually showering peace and blessings on India. If our women's education fail to produce such characters it should be considered to be a total failure; it should better be stopped. But will they not be anachronisms in modern times just as the Swami's ideal man, the all-renouncing Śankara (Shiva), will be?

Is it ever possible in modern times to reach that ideal in either case? Do not Christians regard Christ as their ideal, but how many have reached that height? Still they do not give up Christ. Similar should be the case here too. Has not Christianity produced saints like St. Francis of Assisi? Has not India too produced outstanding personalities like Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Sarada Devi? Their height may be unapproachable yet they are still the types to be imitated. May not Sister Nivedita herself, the founder-teacher of this Girls' school be taken as a modern version of Gārgi and the Rani of Jhansi in one? May not Swami Vivekananda himself be taken as a modern edition of Śankara? The ideal should be kept ablaze, and sincere, sustained attempts should be made to approach it.

But what has our school and college education to do with the building of such characters? The above personalities themselves were never a product of any educational institution. By dint of their personal effort and a natural bent of mind they became what they were, perhaps in spite of the educational institutions then in vogue. Yes, it is true that geniuses are born and not made; and it has a special reference to our country. But Swami Vivekananda wanted to enlighten and broaden the moral atmosphere where such geniuses could be produced in numbers. The moral atmosphere, however ennobling, of the school, is not all that is required of it. It must represent the society whose children it wants to bring up. It must be representative of the noblest aspirations and traditions of all classes of the society, which it means to serve. It must be an ideal product of the present society, orienting it at the same time towards its natural fulfilment. Failing in the first, it will not attract students, failing in the second, it will not bid for progress. To have both these factors the founder of an educational institution, especially one meant for girls, the future moulders of the nation, must study society deeply, its past, present and future, identify herself with the whole society and dazzle before it to present its glorious future. Sister Nivedita was such a founder of a girls' school which now bears her name. Whoever entered, in those days, the precincts of her school used to feel immediately how the little girls were developing in the best traditions of Bengal, moving steadily, without their knowledge to the ideal of Uma and Sita. Nobody should expect that the first or second batch of students coming out of the school have actually been Uma or Sita. But they were surely on the line. And given other Sister Niveditas, the school bids well for producing ideal women. But where shall we get Vivekanandas and Niveditas? There's the rub. Still we must keep the ideal as bright as possible and with whatever materials available we should honestly try to establish such schools. To educate the society to build up such a thoroughly reformed one is another task the Swami has laid on the dedicated teachers of such girls' schools and colleges. In most cases when the Swami was asked about the solution of problems concerning women his one answer was, 'Am I a woman that you ask me that?' His idea was that it is the truly educated ladies of the land who are competent to think about and solve their own problems.

V

There is a minor point in the Swami's programme for building the Indian nation, which should be mentioned. The Swami was dead against Indians' sitting at the feet of the West to learn religion. Everyone, whether of the West or of the East, was at liberty to preach anything secular or spiritual in India; and the Swami loved India for her broad catholicism. But playing the part of a spiritual *guru* by a non-Indian on the Indian soil was what he did not like. The main reason for this abhorrence of his was that it was impossible for these foreign missionaries to eschew politics from their evangelism. In the name of religion they helped, the political authorities that be, to strengthen the political and economic bondage of the Indians. Another important point was that some well-meaning English men and women adopted Hinduism and were interpreting the religion in wrong ways, laying emphasis on the part played by ghosts and hobgoblins. The Swami was against both these classes of people.

The Western travels of the Swami convinced him that the West had virtually discarded religion. Dogmas and tenets of the orthodox religion in the West going against modern enlightenment could not be followed. The new interpretations, not being based on the spiritual experiences of saints and sages, had no force behind them and therefore did not appeal. The nobler and more intellectual people were searching for something more rational and convincing and were actually being attracted towards Vedantism. The Indian masses, in their ignorance and credulity were better connoisseurs of religion than the English educated Indians; and it is these people who played the renegades and tried to convert the masses. There were undoubtedly some mass conversions of the so-called low classes of people but that was due to the social tyranny and poverty and not to the superiority of the alien religion. The foreign missionaries found that neither in their intellectual attainments, nor in their moral excellence could they hold their ground against the Indian *sādhus;* so they were compelled to lean on the British government which readily exploited them for its own aggrandizement. Christ kept politics away from religion: 'Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's', said he. The Prophet was compelled by the persecution of his brother Arabs to combine politics with religion. But his religion has its own inherent strength, as all other religions have, which is capable of standing on its own legs, unaided by politics. That politics is not a good ally of religion has been proved by the rise and fall of the Islamic sovereignties. Those empires came and are gone but Islam remains, perhaps more glorified by its mystic counterpart, the Sufism. Blood being thicker than the Baptismal water, people continue to preach racialism in the name of religion. Therefore, it is dangerous to allow foreigners to preach their religions in others' lands. And it is a matter of pride that even today there are more devout Christians and Mohammedans in India than in all other countries put together. There is actually no need for Indian churches and mosques being dominated over by alien missionaries. Indians can very well take charge of them. It is good to be reminded here of the Swami's definition of an Indian, viz. one who has identified himself with the whole history of India and has accepted realization of God or Ātman as the goal of life.

VI

As a result of implementing the programme of the above type of education both for men and women and for the classes and the masses in the Hindu society and of mechanizing industries and agriculture and of equitable distribution of wealth, a new pattern of Hindu society would be woven. The inordinate narrowness and selfishness that have been eating into the vitals of the society during a thousand years of slavery, the innumerable groups and categories into which it has been divided and subdivided would have to vanish, and a sturdy, active, intellectually and morally free (i.e., truly intellectual and moral) people would have to be born. In the meantime our Muslim and Christian (not brethren but real) brothers and sisters, if they were sincere, if their love of God were true, must have travelled a long way towards national integration; they must have realized that for the finite souls to reach the Infinite there must of necessity be infinite approaches; that though the ways and the point of start were different the goal was the same; that throughout the length and breadth of the country the same God was being proclaimed from mosques, churches and temples; that the same parental love surged in all hearts, be they Christian, Muslim or Hindu; that the same fraternal affection, the same feeling of charity, kindness and altruism dwelled in all hearts irrespective of faith, nationality and surroundings; that the whole atmosphere of India from point to point was surcharged, like the body, mind and heart of its dwellers, with purity and holiness; that each and everyone of the Indians was destined to have a loving hand in the building up of this unique nation which would be an epitome of internationalism in its best form. Then there will be real union of hearts among the Hindus, Muslims and Christians, as among others. All these have to be done through the proper types of educational institutions manned by truly catholic teachers and by religious preachers of different faiths who have at least got the intellectual conviction about the truth of the above ideas and sentiments. Swami Vivekananda had not the slightest doubt about the advent of this new glorious era in India. People of all faiths and denominations are, he was emphatic enough on this, bound to open up to this grand ideal. Those who will, consciously or unconsciously, obstruct it or delay its coming will be simply carried away by its flood tide. They are, according to him, objects of pity, not of hatred or derision. New India will march on, the fallen will die and will be forgotten.

It bears repetition here that the greatest stumbling block in the way to national integration is the hatred, jealousy, pride and consequent innumerable divisions and sub-divisions prevailing in the Hindu society. The Christians and Muslims also have their quota of all these things; but it would be easier for them to drive away these defects and combine first among themselves and then between the Christians and Muslims, for in them there are more points of similarity than of difference; and compared to the Hindu society they are of recent growth and therefore the roots of evil have not gone so deep as in the other. Still we do not think that the correction of the defect in the Hindu society and the introduction of new elements in it will take more time than for the Christians and Muslims to accept India i.e. Indian culture, as their own. The reason based on facts is simple. The leaders of the Hindu society — not those who have discarded religion but those who have accepted love of God as the sole goal of human life — have sincerely adopted the above attitude of reform in social and religious matters, and through their newly started educational and cultural institutions are trying to rectify the defects and bring it up to date.

The Swami has given us a grave warning, which we will do well to remember. It is the danger of India discarding religion and taking to politics or economics as the goal of the nation. We are to analyse the present situation and see if the Swami's warning bears criticism. First of all let us analyse the facts obtaining in our society. In these fifteen years of our political freedom, what has happened to our country? After the passing away of Mahatmaji the wing of constructive workers in the Congress became paralyzed: all shrewd and intelligent people joining the parliamentarian wing. The parliament may legislate but cannot construct, and legislation takes people nowhere. The Indian Communists and Socialists have no constructive work to their credit. It cannot be said that when they come to power they will start building the nation, for it requires patient training of an altogether different kind. What is more, is that they have succeeded in creating an atmosphere of hatred against all kinds of executive — based not on high idealism which makes one noble, active and altruistic, but on selfishness — which has made the masses, impervious to all appeal to nationalism and patriotism, far less to internationalism. Idleness and all kinds of slovenly habits have taken possession of the masses, the ranks and the *bourgeoisie*. Themselves trained to cynicism, they have turned one full generation of the nation into idler cynics, who carp and gossip and would not work or produce. With such camp-followers they are not likely to succeed when they come to power. No amount of licking deliberately spoiled children can succeed in changing idleness to active habits, or egotism to altruism.

What India requires today is men of active habits and organized work. The recent development of the above mentality in all classes of people is conducive to neither. There cannot be any organized activity if the executives are flouted on the slightest pretext. In the absence of organized activity chaos prevails. And chaos goeth before ruin. The main defect in all the political parties in India stems not from the non-observance of this or that political principle by the party members but from what has been accepted as the fundamental of those principles. Barring the few old guards the entire generation of young politicians is infected with cynicism born of materialistic philosophy. Materialism cannot support morality. If everything is matter, ever in flux, if death is the end of human life, then to make hay while the sun shines turns out to be the only rational conclusion. That in China people, let us admit, have made some progress does not prove anything to the contrary. Dictatorship prevails there, people are compelled to do what they are bidden to. The dictators themselves, both individually and in groups, sit in uneasy chairs, not knowing if others are trying to push them out of power. Liquidation of individuals and groups seems to take place now and then. People like to be free; bondage is temporary, freedom is eternal. People are not happy under dictation. When that freedom will come, and come it must, this materialism will drive them to selfish enjoyment unrestrained. Chaos is the inevitable result of that. Materialism and selfish enjoyment are inseparable chums, wherever the one is there the other must be. To curb our desire for enjoyments another ' ism ' is necessary which will show us better joys and higher powers born of self-restraint and inwardness.

Cannot education bring about a change, make egoistic people altruistic? Based on materialistic philosophy it cannot. If we choose to be rational it can. But this choosing also is barred, such is materialism. Matter being meant for enjoyment, it leads more and more to enjoyment. And enjoyment cannot be of the same old things. New things, new adventures, must be created to keep up enjoyment. Running evermore after work and adventure, man's limited energy and power, his brain and the sense organs get tired. Like cultivating a field too intensely and thereby converting it into a barren land, man's body and mind get exhausted too quickly by rush of work, to which matter lures him. Exuberance of work and aspiration, intensified by planned training and education from childhood to the end of youth, leaves no leisure for man during this period to keep quiet and think if there is anything within him worth attending to or if his heart desires something else also. And at the end of this period ' sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything ', the same man turns into a picture of hopelessness and vacuum; but restlessness, having been ingrained in his nature, will not leave him. And restlessness without energy and direction tends to — or is as good as — madness.

Moreover enjoyment of matter must be by and through matter i.e. body and brain and sense organs. These being innumerable and created tastes being similar and limited, quarrels for possession are bound to develop. Trained aspirations and active habits delibrately oriented towards external acquisition are sure to intensify quarrels into wars or brink of war. Therefore in the midst of activities and the joys of new inventions and discoveries, in the midst of plenty of enjoyables and amusements, in the midst of intense thinking and observation and experiment in libraries and laboratories, there is settled an uneasiness, a hovering mischief, a big ugly note of interrogation everywhere and at all times, and this will remain unless the authorities succeed in changing thinking man into an automaton,—which of course will be murder of man for whom all this fuss and bustle of cities and towns are meant. It is not the primacy of matter, but of spirit, that is both the truth and the saviour.

In present-day Russia there does prevail a sort of altruism but it is forced and there is still a dearth of enjoyables. Moreover in their zeal to build a new nation on a new ideology the Russians are too engrossed in activities to think calmly or even enjoy intensely. Hence Russia cannot be taken as an example of altruism developing out of materialism. Materialists have no rational answer to the question, ' Why should one individual sacrifice his personal enjoyment for another, whether of the present generation or the future, if he could help it? ' And enthusiasm based on irrational data must be temporary. With the waning of enthusiasm rethinking is bound to start, as it has already done in Russia. Here comes the necessity of a rational philosophy as the basis of social recontruction, otherwise revolution suffers a set-back. From the day it was born dialectic materialism could not stand its ground in the bright open world ; it survives in the darkness of seclusion and isolation, repression and regimentation. Hence it is time that we heed the Swami's warning and base our national integration not on materialism but on spiritualism. God or spirit has been the centre of India's culture and civilization and He should continue to be so in any future time. Socialism, or the principle of altruism involved in Socialism, is not compelled to ally itself with materialism at the cost of reason. Emotions and sentiments need not be throttled and killed. They are naturally based on reason, on a higher level, a little orientation is what is necessary. Judged by others or from other's point of view an individual may appear as a mass of matter ; but to himself he not only appears as, but actually is, a mass of mind, feeling, observing, thinking, and building up his world of matter. This limited mass of mind or consciousness soon finds, by its exercise, of reason, that it is in the midst of a vast continuum of consciousness on all sides which is building up the macrocosm of matter as much as it is creating the microcosm — and this is what is called God or Spirit. Spiritualism gives socialism a sound basis and ennobles it too. Without passing through a brutish period of killing and repression it helps its enemies, just by giving them a little more time, to sublimate themselves by understanding their true nature through proper education and brings about a commonweal based on love and active cooperation. If the goal of socialism is this commonweal and making ego-centric man altruistic and if by basing it on Spirituality it can be achieved, why tag it to materialism and brutalize man by compelling him to wade through repression and bloodshed ? Hence our programme of nation building should be based on God as first proclaimed by Swami Vivekananda and followed by Tagore, Sri Aurobindo, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Bipin Chandra Pal and Mahatma Gandhi. There are minor differences between them but on this point they are all unanimous. It is only after the passing away of Mahatma Gandhi that materialism is trying to raise its ugly head in all political parties, except the rightists. The rightists' championship of religion is giving them an undue advantage over their rivals, which the former are exploiting to the utmost. Read between lines, Swami Vivekananda would appear to be more a Socialist than a Capitalist; but he based his nation-building programme on a true type of national education whose centre is God ; his programme of industrialization also is based on God. India at the cross-roads is to decide which road to take. Socialism, it seems, has been chosen. Should India accept or reject God is the burning question now. If God is accepted, education needs a drastic change and the Swami becomes our guide.

(*Concluded*)

Dead, insentient matter never calls out knowledge, it is the action of knowledge that brings out knowledge. ...No knowledge can come without the Teachers. ... All knowledge is in man, but certain environments are necessary to call it out.

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Concentration will bring perfect repose to mind and body every time it is practised.

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The whole social fabric is based upon that idea of restraint, and we all know that the man or woman who has not learnt the great lesson of bearing and forbearing leads a most miserable life.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND MODERN MAN'S SPIRITUAL QUEST

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

Swami Vivekananda was a monk, a renouncer of the world. He lived only for thirty-nine years, from 1863 to 1902. But why is it that people all over the world, people of all races, people belonging to all political or religious faiths are moved by what he did and said in that short span of life?

The simple answer to this question seems to be that those who know anything about him somehow realize that Vivekananda personifies something crucially important for himself and also for the entire human race.

Vivekananda touched human life at many points in a redeeming manner. But his greatest service is in the field of religion in general. In particular he is the most effective helper in modern man's spiritual quest.

The modern man is a very misunderstood man. And he is most misunderstood in regard to his spiritual predilections. The typical modern man who is usually supposed to be irreverent and casual about religion is not so much modern as typical. Denunciation of God is at least as old as Lucifer. There is nothing modern about it. The truly modern man is a seeker of truth on his own terms. He cannot be frowned by any authority to accept any dogma. He just does not care to be frightened or fuddled. He has no difficulty in accepting any teaching of religion if his three simple questions are answered : Can it be proved? Does it work? Does it help? If these three questions are answered in the affirmative, he will go to any length to follow the teachings. In other words, if religion is willing to go along with his being scientific, practical and pragmatic he will be happy to be religious. If religion would refuse to do so, he will let religion go without shedding any tears. But under no circumstances will he abjure the scientific, the practical and the pragmatic, religion or no religion.

And this disposition of the modern man is entirely dominated by the type of devotion to truth he is, under the *zeitgeist*, capable of. He is certainly not against truth. He is against any privacy of truth, its callousness to here and now, and its refusal to till the farmyard of life.

Most of the traditional religions have been suspicious of the modern man. But Vivekananda, a modern man himself, took his case directly to religion, and then from religion he returned to modern man. And the result has been the building of a unique understanding of supreme importance. And of these the beneficiaries have been all the religions of the world.

II

How could this extraordinary thing happen? To Vivekananda, in his own words, Sri Ramakrishna was, 'My teacher, my master, my hero, my ideal, my God in life.' In one of his most fervent declarations Vivekananda said :

> 'If there has been anything achieved by my thought or words or deeds, if from my lips has ever fallen one word that has helped any one in this world, I lay no claim to it, it was his (Sri Ramakrishna's). But if there have been curses falling from my lips, if there has been hatred coming out of me, it is all mine ; and all that has been life-giving, strengthening, pure, and holy has been his inspiration, his words and he himself... At his feet I have learned everything.'

In Vivekananda's life Sri Ramakrishna came, and in Sri Ramakrishna's life Vivekananda came, one seeking the other, for the fulfilment of the divine mission in the world, a mission which is in the process of unfoldment in history, and will benefit all mankind eventually.

Vivekananda was born in Calcutta in 1863 in a cultured aristocratic family. Born with the brain of a genius, Narendranath, as he was called in his pre-monastic days, received a liberal education in various branches of learning including music, both vocal and instrumental.

When he was yet in his teens his reading list included Mill and Descartes ; Hume, Bentham, Spinoza and Darwin ; Comte, Spencer, Kant, Hegel and Schopenhaur. He read about whatever the Western science and philosophy of that day had to teach. Moreover, he also studied the religious and literary classics in Sanskrit.

As a result of his studies Narendranath turned a near agnostic. With a keen virile mind, inquiring, rational, fearless and buoyant, he went about dashing down dogmas and asking people for the proofs for their faith. Those who were religious leaders in society, to them he brought a straight, inconvenient but simple question : 'Sir, have you seen God ?' On this hinged his entire future. According to him, the dialectical implications of life itself were to be different from what they would be if God were not. So this became the central and pivotal question of his entire being.

Pure in heart, he wanted to see God. But how could he seek God without being sure whether or not He existed at all ? Therefore, he wanted to see a man who had seen God. But for one's seeing God there could not be any conclusive proof of His existence. If one man had seen God, under the given conditions other men too could see God.

So Narendranath went about seeking a man who had seen God.

III

Not far from Narendranath's residence, another man was going about seeking someone who would and could become the purveyor of his direct and abundant knowledge of God to the world at large, becoming a liaison, as it were, between himself and the seeking and aspiring souls of the world.

This seeking man was Sri Ramakrishna, today worshipped by millions of people all over the world as a unique God-man who graced the world in the last century.

Sri Ramakrishna was born in 1836 in a village of Bengal. A very unusual boy, born with God-hunger, he had had spiritual experiences even before he entered his teens. At the age of nineteen he became the worshipper in a temple of the Divine Mother, called Kali. Engaged in worship, he soon became mad for the vision of the Mother. He went all out, prayed, meditated and wept day and night, lost his sleep and body-consciousness — yet the Mother could not be seen. At last, one day, in a frenzy of despair, he clasped a sword to put an end to his useless life. At that crucial moment with a supreme histrionic sense the Divine Mother revealed Herself to Sri Ramakrishna.

After that Sri Ramakrishna's God-hunger increased like a fire fed by gasoline. And that fire engulfed himself and his world. He sought and saw nothing but God. He took to one discipline after another, known in Hinduism, and with his unimaginable intensity and rapidity he realized God in His various personal aspects. Then came his crowning Spiritual experience of the realization of the identity of his soul with the Supreme Spirit. Even then Sri Ramakrishna did not stop. He practised Islam and experienced the spiritual truths taught in that religion. Moreover, he had also the vision of Christ, who got mystically united with him.

After having seen, known and experienced God in a variety of ways known to various religions, Sri Ramakrishna came to certain conclusions about himself and the mission of his life, of which two are relevant for our present purpose :

(1) In the first place, it was revealed to him that he was one of those who are called Incarnations of God.

(2) In the second place, being an Incarnation of God, his spiritual strivings and experiences were not meant for himself, but for ushering in a new era of spiritual unfoldment, for demonstrating before mankind the

reality of God and for validating the various spiritual disciplines leading to realization of God.

These revelations brought Sri Ramakrishna new agonies. Now the problem before him was how to pass on his God-knowledge to mankind. Through the practice of untold austerities for twelve years, his body had become so delicate that it could not stand those hardships, which go with the propagation of spiritual truths to humanity at large.

In 1881 in a place called Dakshineswar, near Calcutta, two men met. One was the sturdy young man, Narendranath, seeking God in an aggressive, frontal manner ; and another was Sri Ramakrishna, the God-man, seeking a transmitter of his knowledge to mankind. And this meeting came to be the mightiest explosion of truth in the recent spiritual history of the world.

On the very first day of their actual meeting Sri Ramakrishna with his unerring vision recognized that this lad of eighteen was going to be the conduit of his spiritual experiences to the world. On the other hand Narendranath also knew that he had ultimately met a person who had seen God and saw Him always.

Narendranath became Sri Ramakrishna's disciple, but a very unique one, who demanded of his teacher to prove his credentials at every step. While Narendranath's dedication to his Master was complete, he tested Sri Ramakrishna's experiences as one with an awakened, scientific mind would do. To this demand of his disciple Sri Ramakrishna most willingly submitted. Moreover he urged his disciple to accept his words only after testing them as a money changer would test coins.

This encounter was a most creative and fascinating one. Here was a man absolutely innocent of modern education but steeped in direct God-experience, a transfigured person who saw only the Supreme Spirit everywhere, and whose world was enveloped in God. And here was another man, God-hungry, but would not abdicate his scientific spirit for accepting anything on hearsay. He was the representative modern man, our big brother, who turned his penetrating focus of the light of reason and demand for direct perception on everything hoary and holy. Our battle was fought valiantly by him. What was the result of this battle? The teacher triumphed. And the student won the victory, a victory which later in life he used, not for defeating anybody, but for enlivening, ennobling and enlightening all.

Under Sri Ramakrishna's training of five years Narendranath had varieties of spiritual experiences with his scientific mind not only intact but grown stronger. In his later life Swami Vivekananda even said that he had scientific training from Sri Ramakrishna. Before passing away Sri Ramakrishna transferred all his spiritual powers to Narendranath and left him with the mandate of bringing spiritual knowledge to mankind and removing their miseries.

Whatever Narendranath learnt from Sri Ramakrishna had to pass through the crucible of his personal experience before he accepted them. He did not accept any unproven hypothesis out of fear or reverence. And what did he learn from Sri Ramakrishna through such a process ?

Among many other truths Narendranath learnt from his teacher these few are relevent to our purpose. He learnt that :

> God is. God is one, though called variously. God is both personal and impersonal. God can be seen.
>
> God-seeing is the ultimate end of life, not only because it alone brings us total fulfilment but also because it alone is the ultimate solvent of all the problems of existence.
>
> When the central illumination of life born of God experience is lost sight of, then life becomes cluttered with contradictions and ends in futilities. Whereas when it is held as the directive principle of life's functional process, then are dissolved once for all, all contradictions and conflicts between the Absolute and the relative, the past and the present, the new and the old, the head and the heart, science and religion, reason and faith, East and West, my 'doxy' and your

'doxy', my 'ism' and your 'ism.' Behind and at the root of all the conflicts is ignorance, the illusion of separateness. When one realizes the identity of the soul with the supreme Spirit, one finds the solution of all the problems of existence in the unity of existence itself.

Therefore through movement toward unity of existence alone, there can be further evolution of human civilization.

Vivekananda learnt another spiritually challenging and socially revolutionary truth from Sri Ramakrishna. If God could be worshipped through images, then why not through living men? This was something entirely new even in Hinduism. Further Sri Ramakrishna taught Vivekananda that empty stomach is no good for religion.

When Vivekananda wanted to remain immersed in the bliss of the super-conscious state, Ramakrishna shamed him into a greater concept of himself. The Master taught the disciple that instead of selfishly enjoying the bliss, he will have to suffer for and serve men, remove their miseries, and bring them the liberating spiritual knowledge.

The truths he experienced at the feet of Sri Ramakrishna galvanized the seeker Narendranath, into the world-moving Vivekananda.

IV

In the making of Vivekananda from Narendranath had gone in many imponderables, some of which we may not be able to sift out. But when there he stands before us as one of the greatest spiritual teachers of mankind, perhaps the most excellent teacher for the new age, certain strands of his personality which make him unique we can clearly see.

In the first place Vivekananda was a perfectly illumined soul by virtue of his plenary experience of that great equation of life: the identity of his soul with the supreme spirit.

He was thus the cosmic man who had reached the end of the pilgrimage from the finite threshold of the empirical to the unlimitedness of the Infinite.

It was only after experiencing the limitlessness of the Infinite within himself and himself in everything that he became the teacher.

And this he did being commissioned by a God-man. He was literally forced to assume the spiritual leadership for the fulfilment of the divine mission of an Incarnation of God. This makes his ministration especially a significant one in recent history.

Along with his being an illumined soul, Vivekananda was also a thorough going modern man up to his finger tips, with a razor sharp analytical and keen scientific mind.

While he had the mystic experience of the highest order, he was also a product of a modern university, which had also the encyclopaedic knowledge in various branches of learning, except religion and philosophy which were his main provinces.

He knew very well the problem of this world in which we ordinary men and women live, move and have our being.

While he knew the truth about Ātman or human soul, he also had, by virtue of being a deep student of history, a masterly grasp of the forces that are operative in the affairs of the world.

Though he was a master of non-attachment, he was an oceanic heart and a very sensitive lover of humanity. Wherever there was a sigh in the world, an agony and a helpless cry they all had a painful echo in his heart. He was the universal big brother of all humanity, with a wonderfully developed social consciousness, and a sympathy for those who suffer for any reason.

He was a personification of dynamism, fearlessness and strength that come from the experience of the immortality of the soul.

Vivekananda was an eternal optimist, because he knew that in the ultimate analysis there is nothing like failure in life. Every fall is a boost. Salvation of every soul at some point of time is inevitable.

V

Today religion faces many challenges from various quarters. It appears to be widely believed that the future of religion is not very bright, for it is doubtful if religion will ever be able to meet all the challenges that the discoveries of science are every day bringing before it. Yet there was never a time when mankind needed more the saving ministrations of religion.

But how could religion help without itself being able to meet these challenges pitted against itself?

It was one of Vivekananda's great services to the welfare of humanity that he showed how religion can face all the challenges and help man in the present and at any future time.

If these were the only services Vivekananda had done to religion and thus to humanity, he would have deserved our eternal gratitude. He has shown in effect by his life, work and teachings that Religion has the power not only to survive but also to conquer. Religion is not only the victim of challenges, but it has its own powerful challenges to offer. It has no need to be apologetic or on the defensive. He has also proved that true religion alone goes to the root of all the problems of existence. Hence, if this is all right, everything is bound to be all right.

If you take a synoptic view of all the problems that beset humanity, it can be reduced to this one requirement: We require to do something special or rather to do all things specially in a way which will be conducive to the all-round security, welfare and advancement of all.

More explicitly, for a possible meaningful existence in the future, the fundamental tasks before men are three: (*a*) to construct a supranational, cohesive humanity; (*b*) to give a purposive direction to the whole process of civilization; (*c*) to deepen the spiritual consciousness of the individual.

If you bring all the teachings of Swami Vivekananda to a focal point it is this: true religion alone can fulfil these three fundamental tasks.

Now, here is the difficulty. There are ever so many religions with various contending and contradictory concepts. And while detractors of religion are many, inter-religious quarrels are not also few.

In this situation how can Religion do its basic tasks?

Here comes the specific need of knowing by all who would care to know, about the services of Vivekananda to religion as such.

Negatively speaking Vivekananda first liberated religion from two charges. One charge says: throughout history religion has been an ally of evil. Hence let us discard it. Another charge says: after all religion is inconsequential. So what does it matter if it goes?

In answer to the first charge Vivekananda says:

> 'Inspite of all the devilry religion is blamed with, religion is not at all at fault; no religion ever persecuted men, no religion ever burnt witches, no religion ever did any of these things. What then incited people to do such things? Politics but never religion. And if such politics take the name of religion whose fault is it?'

In regard to the second charge Vivekananda says:

> 'Now comes the question, can religion really accomplish anything? It can. It brings man eternal life. It has made man what he is, and will make of this human animal a God. That is what religion can do. Take religion from human society, and what will remain? Nothing but a forest of brutes.'

VI

Vivekananda's positive services to religion were these:

He clarified the concept of true religion, by teaching man to see the ocean of the one basic Religion behind the waves of many religions. He in fact revolutionized religion by opening the paths of salvation to all in redefining the yogas in a manner understandable to the common man.

He simplified, by throwing out all junk, accretions and superstitions, but carefully retaining every grain of truth.

He humanized religion by making it respectfully responsive to human needs at lower keys without losing its transcendental character. He strengthened religion by showing that true religion had nothing to fear and much to learn and gain from scientific thinking.

He unified religions by explaining the need for religious harmony and also by baring the rationale of such harmony.

In clarifying the concept of true religion Vivekananda said :

> 'True religion is entirely transcendental. Every being that is in the universe, has the potentiality of transcending the senses ; even the little worm will one day transcend the senses and reach God. No life will be a failure ; there is no such thing as failure in this universe. There never was my religion or yours, my national religion or your national religion. There never existed many religions ; there is only one religion. One Infinite Religion has existed all through eternity and will ever exist, and this religion is expressing itself in various countries in different ways.'

In simplifying religion to its essentials Vivekananda said :

> 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divinity within by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control or philosophy —by one, or more or all of these—and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas, or rituals or books, or temples, or forms are but secondary details.'

In humanizing religion Vivekananda said : that while the true religion is wholly transcendental, yet he did not believe in that religion which would not care to wipe widows' tears and orphans' helplessness.

In one of his famous poems giving the testament of his faith he says :

> 'These are his manifold forms before thee
> Rejecting them where seekest thou for God ?
> Who loves all beings without distinction
> He indeed is worshipping best his God.'

As a necessary corollary of this faith Vivekananda preached his revolutionary gospel of service to human beings looking on them as manifestations of the Divine. In strengthening religion Vivekananda said :

> 'Is religion to justify itself by the discoveries of reason, through which every other concrete science justifies itself ? Are the same methods of investigation which we apply to science and knowledge outside to be applied to the science of religion ? In my opinion this must be so, and I am also of the opinion that the sooner it is done the better. If a religion is destroyed by such investigations, it was then all the time useless, unworthy superstition, and the sooner it goes the better. I am thoroughly convinced that its destruction would be the best thing that could happen. All that is dross would be taken off, no doubt, but the essential parts of religion will emerge triumphant out of this investigation. Not only will it be made scientific, as scientific at least as any of the conclusions of physics or chemistry, but will have greater strength, because physics and chemistry have no internal mandate to vouch for its truth, which religion has.'

In unifying religions Vivekananda said :

> 'Religious quarrels are always over the husks. When purity goes, when spirituality goes, leaving the soul dry, then quarrels begin, and not before.'
>
> 'The end of all religions is the realization of God in the soul.'
>
> 'Teach your children that they are divine, that religion is a positive something and not a negative nonsense ; that it is not subjection to groans when under oppression, but expression and manifestation.'

He further urged all the religions of the world to inscribe on their banners the words :

> 'Help and not fight.' 'Assimilation and not destruction ;' 'Harmony and peace and not dissension.'

According to Vivekananda there should be harmony among religions for these two common sense reasons : (1) God is one though called variously ; (2) The proof of one religion depends on the proof of the rest.

All these services, however, may be considered to be doctrinal. But Vivekananda, being a practical genius, did not stop with this.

VII

He not only gave his message, but also devised a method, and developed a machinery to make his ideas go into field operation and enter the historical process by bringing about a transformation in human civilization itself.

His message as far as religion is concerned we have very briefly discussed.

The method he developed for putting into practice his ideas about religion were 'renunciation and service'. Renunciation as interpreted by Vivekananda means, constant movement towards the truest, purest and noblest in oneself, until God is realized. Service, as interpreted by Vivekananda, means movement Godward in such a way as is conducive to helping others also to do the same.

This is Vivekananda's unique device for working out one's own salvation, and also the good of the world, simultaneously.

The machinery he established for his religious views to raise a harvest in history, in this method, is the Ramakrishna movement, through which monastics and lay followers devote themselves to the service and all-round welfare of humanity at large.

VIII

But above all these doctrinal teachings about religion and practical work, and work for religion, stands Vivekananda himself as proof positive, power positive of religion today.

In his days, the Buddha said to the scoffers and unbelievers of religion : *ehi-pasika*, come and see.

Come, practise the spiritual disciplines, properly and adequately, wait patiently, and see intelligently what happens to you and your world.

Though Buddha never certainly meant that, yet in his challenge there was another implication, too — to come and see also the Buddha, that transfigured person, that fathomless compassion, and that transcendental wisdom —to be convinced of the fact that religion is the greatest power in the world.

Even as Buddha did in his time in our days Vivekananda also challenges the world on behalf of true religion and says : *ehi-pasika* : come and see.

THE IDEAL OF SERVICE AS EXPOUNDED BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

P. M. BHASKARAN NAMBUDIRIPAD

'Whatever exists in this universe, is to be covered with the Lord,' says one of the ancient Upaniṣads. Swami Vivekananda explained this saying thus : 'We have to cover everything with the Lord Himself, not by a sort of false optimism, not by blinding our eyes to the evil, but by really seeing God in everything.'[1] Based on this realization a philosophy has been formulated in the dictum *'ātmano mokṣārtham jagaddhitāya cha'*, for one's own salvation and for the good of the world. It is on this supreme truth that the ideal of service as expounded by Swami Vivekananda is based. This term ideal gives great scope to social service and spiritual redemption and it derives its motive force from the Vedantic view of spiritual oneness of the world with God. The great Śankara gave the gist of the Vedanta Philosophy when he declared, *'Brahma satyam jagan mithyā, jivo Brahmaiva nāparaḥ'*, meaning Brahman alone is real, the universe is unreal and the individual soul is no other than the universal Soul. Swami Vivekananda laid more stress on the second part of this famous saying (namely the individual soul is no other than the universal Soul). As a result man is essentially looked upon as God and so service to man is considered as a spiritual discipline for the realization of one's Self just like japa and meditation.

Now, all work is ennobling provided it is done in the right spirit and attitude. That is, it is not mere work that purifies our mind but the spirit behind it. For example, it is not the mere act of making a garland that is spiritual but the remembrance and feeling that it is for the sake of the Lord that makes it spiritual. Similarly the mere act of giving food and medicine or education to the hungry, the diseased or the ignorant is not spiritual, but it is the awareness or the feeling that God is in man or the recognition that man is essentially God that makes it spiritual. This attitude or spirit towards work purifies the mind. It is from such a purification of the mind, which is also one of the aims of spiritual discipline, that social service gets its spiritual value. In the purified mind dawns wisdom or *vidyā* which enables one to realize one's Self. Therefore, social service, according to this view, is primarily motivated by an awareness of the essential divinity of man and hence turns the 'man-centred' seva into the 'God-centred' *sādhana*. As a result of this glorification of service — as a worship of God — 'the knot was tied between religious contemplation and service of the lower orders.' As Romain Rolland says, 'He (Swami Vivekananda) surrounded service with a divine aureole and raised it to the dignity of a religion.'[2] Swami Vivekananda was the first to conceive of such a noble ideal of service in all its fullness without any exception or limit. He realized that this bringing up of the poor and the masses into a better condition must form part and parcel of the spiritual discipline for one's salvation. That is why the service of the poor, the afflicted and the downtrodden form an integral and significant part in the whole scheme of spiritual practice of the Ramakrishna Order. It is here we find the significant transformation of Swamiji from the life of a solitary monk to that of a patriot-saint of India.

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[1] *The Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel*: By Romain Rolland. p. 269.

The Swami was so much moved by the miserable and pitiable condition of the poor, and the diseased that he burst out : 'The poor, the illiterate, the ignorant, the afflicted — let these be your God. Know that service to these alone is the highest religion. He who sees Śiva in the poor, in the weak and in the diseased really worships Śiva, and he who sees Śiva only in the image, his worship is preliminary. I do not care a straw for your *bhakti* or *mukti*. I would even go to a hundred thousand hells to do good to others. That is my *dharma*.' Here we find Swami Vivekananda's universal love and compassion binding him to all the suffering in the universe. He again says : 'The only God that exists, the only God whom I believe in...is my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races.' It was due to his deep and unshakable faith in the human God that he coined the famous phrase '*Daridra-nārāyana*', God in the poor. He believed in a God who is the sum-total of all souls, for 'his universal Soul was rooted in its human soul.' On some other occasion he most feelingly remarked : 'See how simple-hearted these poor illiterate people are! Will you be able to relieve their miseries to some extent at least? ...Alas! how can we have the heart to put a morsel to our mouths, when our countrymen have not the wherewithal to feed and clothe themselves! ... Mother, shall there be no redress for them? ... Alas! nobody in our country thinks for the low, the poor and the miserable!'[3] These outpourings of Swamiji spring spontaneously from a heart which had realized the oneness of all human souls. He eloquently declared, 'After so much Tapasya (Asceticism) I have known that the highest truth is this : "He is present in every being! These are all the manifold forms of Him. There is no other God to seek for. He alone is worshipping God, who serves all beings!"'[4] Such are his glorifications of and affections and sympathy towards his fellow beings.

But this service of man should be done in the right spirit and attitude according to Swamiji; otherwise it will not be helpful to attain the desired enlightenment. 'If service is done in the true spirit of worship it is the most efficacious means to spiritual progress. For, without doubt man is the highest symbol of God and his worship is the highest form of worship on earth.' The Swamiji explains this right spirit and attitude of 'service' thus : 'Thank God for giving you this world as a moral gymnasium to help your development, but never imagine that you can help the world. Doing good to others out of compassion is good, but the *seva* (service) of all beings in the spirit of the Lord is better. Let the giver kneel down and give thanks, let the receiver stand up and permit. See the Lord back of every being and give to Him.'

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[2] *The Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel*: By Romain Rolland. p. 285.

[3] *Prophets of the New India* : by Romain Rolland. pp. 364-65.

[4] *Ibid*., p. 366.

Here, service to man is considered as essentially religious activity, according to this view, mainly because of a human and spiritual awareness of divinity of man and hence is regarded as a spiritual discipline for our supreme aim of perfection. But it must be remembered that this ideal of service is not humanism. For in humanism, man is the centre and society is the field of activity, whereas, in this ideal of service as expounded by Swami Vivekananda, God is the centre and humanity is its field of work. The ideal of service of man as God, is inspired by reverence, love and humility. The service of the poor will not only help the poor but also helps the man who does service, for according to the old saying, 'He who gives, receives.'

But no real service is possible without some amount of sacrifice, for true service springs from renunciation. According to the Swamiji, without renunciation the service will not be effective ; and without service renunciation will not be complete also. It is only by a disinterested spirit or attitude that service becomes really perfect and fruitful.

The ideal of service as expounded by the Swamiji glorified and spiritualised the dignity of human personality.

The highest expression of service and sacrifice is to give oneself for others.

The whole essence of religion consists in this supreme service or self-abnegation. As the Swamiji boldly declares 'Begin by giving your life to save the life of the dying, that is the essence of religion' and the patriot-prophet did not even hesitate to add, 'Although a man has not attained a single system of philosophy, although he does not believe in any God and never has believed, although he has not prayed even once in his whole life, if the simple power of good actions has brought him to the state where he is ready to give up his life and all else for others, he has arrived at the same point to which the religious man will come through his prayers and the philosopher through his knowledge.'[5] Herein lies the supreme message of service and its highest and noblest manifestation. It is here that we find the realization of the true spirit and the essence of self-dedication and sacrifice.

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[5] *The Life of Vivekananda and the Universal Gospel*: by Romain Rolland. p. 190.

We all understand that desires are wrong, but what is meant by giving up desires? How could life go on? It would be the same suicidal advice, killing the desire and the man too. The solution is this. Not that you should not have things which are necessary, and things which are even luxuries. Have all that you want, and more, only know the truth and realize it. Wealth does not belong to anybody. Have no idea of proprietorship, possessorship. All belongs to the Lord, because the Upaniṣads tell us to put the Lord in everything. God is in the wealth that you enjoy. He is in the desire that rises in your mind. He is in the things you buy to satisfy the desire ; He is in your beautiful attire, in your beautiful ornaments. This is the line of thought. All will be metamorphosed as soon as you begin to see things in that light. If you put God in your every movement, in your conversation, in your form, in everything, the whole scene changes, and the world, instead of appearing as one of woe and misery, will become a heaven.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

YAJNAVALKYA'S INSTRUCTION TO EMPEROR JANAKA

(The Doctrine of Liberation)

M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

Yājñavalkya's instruction to Janaka, as it is set forth in the Upaniṣad,[1] is a fairly lengthy one. It comprises most of the topics that are usually dealt with in Advaita Vedānta, under metaphysics and ethics. The doctrine of Brahman as Pure Intelligence and as the sole Reality is expounded in almost the whole of section three and in a few passages of the next. The doctrine of Karma and Transmigration is dealt with in a few passages of both sections. The third important topic relates to the concept of Liberation. It occupies the concluding portion of the fourth section. Transmigration results from ignorance and its cessation by the advent of right knowledge is Liberation. These two, therefore, stand for the state of Ignorance and Enlightenment.

The transaction from the former to the latter may be otherwise expressed as the passage from the condition of desires and actions to that of desirelessness and freedom from all action. In the state of ignorance we see the world outside of us as distinct from ourselves. The world consists of many objects which appeal to our senses. Thinking that they are other than ourselves and therefore do not belong to us we instinctively entertain a desire to come by them and then make frantic efforts to get at them, make them our own and enjoy them. All this proceeds from the false belief that the source of happiness lies in these objects and not in ourselves. When the vendor, for example, cries out in the street 'mango fruit', we no sooner hear the sound but rush out of doors to purchase some of them. We feel satisfied when we have cut the fruit into slices and eaten them. This instance is typical of all the other things for which we conceive a desire. The natural equipoise of the mind is disturbed when desire enters it and is again restored with the gratification of the latter. But there is no guarantee that it will not be disturbed again, for our desires are legion. We desire not only for ourselves but also for others who are near and dear to us. We want this thing and that thing, some for ourselves, others for our sons and yet others for our wives.[2] As soon as some desires are fulfilled, ten more crop up in their place. The more we gratify them the more they multiply. The attempt to come to the end of them by this method is bound to prove futile. One can as well hope to quench a blazing fire by pouring a quantity of ghee on it as to put an end to desires by satisfying them.[3]

What then? How can we root out desires and enjoy undisturbed peace of mind? The extermination must be complete, for if any trace of it is left behind it will gather momentum and raise up its ugly head again. These desires have also a knack of going underground and lying in wait to reassert themselves when we are a little off our guard. Or, they may disappear in one form only to reappear in another form, more subtle and therefore more difficult to detect and subdue. In view of these difficulties one can never be too sure that one has completely conquered one's desires. Any moment man's composure may fly to the winds leaving him entirely at the mercy of an overmastering passion. If a saint like Riśya Śṛnga, known for his child-like innocence and unsophisticated manners, came under the enticements of the women who had been sent to inveigle him, the less said about other frail mortals the better. Sages who had done penance for long ages were taken unawares and came under the sway of their lower nature. The story of Viśwāmitra, narrated at length in the Bālakaṇḍa of Śrimad Rāmāyaṇa is a good illustration. From the manner in which he succumbed to the force of lust, in spite of his long and severe penance, it would seem that desires, even if they are burnt, may yet rise again out of their ashes. The attempt, therefore, to attain the state of desirelessness by either gratifying them or quelling them by the mortification of the flesh, is bound to end in failure.

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[1] *Br. Up.* IV. iii and iv.

[2] Sri Sankara's commentary on *Br. Up.* IV. iv. 12.
ममेदं स्यात्, पुत्रस्य इदं, भार्याया इदं

[3] Manu :
न जातु कामः कामानां उपभोगेन शाम्यति ।
हविषा कृष्णवर्त्मेव भूय एवाभिवर्धते ॥

We have no alternative but to try a more positive method. This method consists in replacing our gross, material desires by slightly more spiritual ones, such as harmless pleasures and the joy arising from the appreciation of works of art. By gradual stages we must learn to find delight in things of the spirit and in disinterested service. Long and steady effort in this direction will bring us to a stage when we can substitute one all-absorbing and comprehensive desire in the place of our diverse, distracting and multifarious desires. This single desire which can effectively replace the motley crowd of unblessed cravings must be both satisfactory and satisfying. Unless it is spiritual through and through, it cannot serve the purpose. It must be the embodiment of the highest truth and the highest value. It must be the finest and ultimate essence of all our ordinary desires. It must arise out of their sublimation. A little reflection will show that our common desires, shorn of their material associations, simplify themselves surprisingly to a mere vague and inarticulate longing. It requires the eye of a poet or a mystic to discover in this longing the passionate desire of the finite self to rejoin the Infinite Self. Mystic poetry, like the Song of Solomon and the Rāsa Krīda in the *Srimad Bhāgavata* are good examples in point. That desires, when directed towards spiritual objects, have a way of undergoing a sea-change and getting completely transformed in the process is clear from the case of the Gopika women. Their love for Kṛṣṇa began in the ordinary way, like that between human beings, but soon, under the imperceptible influence of the Lord, it was divested of all dross and became pure, passionless and platonic. It then symbolized the eager desire on the part of the Jīvātma to become one with the Paramātma. Desires, in the final analysis, signify the finite beings' longing to regain the Paradise which they appear to have lost by sheer ignorance and folly.

The new desire that drives out all our crude desires may be called Ātma Kāma. This is the sovereign remedy recommended by Yājñavalkya. He says that a man becomes desireless when desires leave him. This happens when he has attained all the objects of his desire. This, in its turn, becomes possible when the Ātman takes their place.[4] The Ātman, being the highest truth and the highest value, must be the sole object of a man's desire. He makes out elsewhere[5] that wife, husband, children and possessions are dear, not for their own sake, but for the Ātman that they embody. In another context we read in the Upaniṣad[6] that 'the Ātman is dearer than one's son, one's wealth and everything else that one may hold dear'. The Lord reinforces this truth in the Gita[7] 'That on gaining which a man feels there is no greater gain, and abiding in which he is not moved even by the heaviest of afflictions'. From the context it is clear that the Lord is here referring to the realization of the Ātman.

Against this background we can understand Yājñavalkya's occasional references to the nature of the Absolute in the course of his talk on liberation. He speaks of Brahman as being supra-relational because it is beyond time, space and causal relation. It is supra-rational because it rises above mind and speech and remains unknown and unknowable except by Śruti. It is yet the substance and sustainer of the Universe because it is the Vital Force of the vital forces, the Eye of the eye, the Ear of the ear, the Mind of the mind, the Light of all lights. It remains transcendent and untouched by the evils of the world though in it the five groups of five rest. It is strictly one without a second as it is devoid of difference of every kind—external, internal or organic. It is pure Intelligence, being sentience all compact. When his main theme is to show how man can make the transition from the state of desires to the state of desirelessness, Yājñavalkya refers off and on to the nature of the Absolute. The reason is clear. He means to point out that it is only by hitching one's wagon to this bright, particular star that one can extirpate all the sundry desires that arise in the human mind.

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[4] *Br. Up.* IV. iv.
यो अकामो निष्कामो आप्तकाम आत्मकामो

[5] *Ibid.*, II. iv. 5.

[6] *Ibid.*, I. iv. 8.
तदेतत् प्रेयः पुत्रात्प्रेयो वित्तात्प्रेयोऽन्यस्मात्सर्वस्मा

[7] *Ibid.*, VI. 22.

All this is very easily said but not so easily achieved. Strenuous, constant and unremitting effort is necessary to take even one forward step in the direction of spiritual progress. The mind must be cleansed of its age-long impurities in the shape of egoism, selfishness, arrogance, conceit, self-love and so forth. It is no easy matter to rid the mind of these thick incrustations. The root cause of these undesirable qualities is the notion of 'I' and 'mine'. To overcome this false identification of the self with the non-self Yājñavalkya recommends sacrifice (*yajña*), gifts (*dāna*) and penance (*tapas*). What is given to the gods is *Yajña* and what is given to fellow human beings is *dāna*. In both cases the gift is accompanied by the declaration 'not mine' (*na mama*). While offering something to God Agni, for example, the formula is: 'I make this gift to God Agni; it is no longer mine.'[8] When we give something to other human beings the formula is: 'I give this to you; it is no longer mine.'[9] The aim in performing penance (*tapas*) is not to mortify the flesh but to cultivate the feeling that the body is not an end in itself to be pampered and well looked after but just an instrument at our disposal, like any other, to be employed in promoting right causes. Spare diet (anāśaka) is also enjoined with the same end in view. The notion 'this body is mine' comes as a handy and useful intermediate stage between the feeling 'I *am* this body' and the assertion 'I am *not* this body'. It is difficult at one bound to disown the body and declare 'I am Pure Spirit'. The transition will be rendered easier if we provide for a half-way house between the two. Once we learn to look upon the body as a possession, like the house, the further stage of disowning it will not be very difficult. Ordinarily a man may not like to walk bare-footed in the hot sun, but he may bring himself to do it when he is on a pilgrimage to a holy place. Clearly he then holds his body as an instrument to serve a higher purpose. When it comes to that, he cheerfully sacrifices his body in the interests of truth and righteousness (*dharma*). It then becomes very clear that he is prepared to throw away the body as if it were not his. To men filled with a high spiritual purpose, discarding the body is as easy as throwing away their tattered clothes. *Yajña*, *dāna*, *tapas* and *anāśaka* are therefore indispensable aids in promoting the transition to desirelessness. They help man to get over the feeling of 'I' and 'mine'. With the disappearance of the false identification of the real self with the body, other undesirable qualities like self-love, self-esteem, self-assertion, self-righteousness and self-centredness will automatically make their exit. The formal study of the Vedas, especially the Upaniṣads (*vedānuvacana*) is also included in the discipline. It will help in speeding up the process by providing right notions regarding the nature of the self. These will fill up the vacuum created by the disappearance of the wrong notions.

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[8] अग्नये स्वाहा अग्नये इदं न मम

[9] तुभ्यमहं संप्रददे न मम, न मम ।

Being cleansed of its impurities, the mind will now be free to enter on the path of jñāna which is the high road leading to liberation. True knowledge regarding the nature of the self will dawn on the mind, thus purified, as a state of consciousness (*vṛtti*). A further course of specialised discipline is however necessary before this can happen. The saving knowledge has to be acquired by sitting at the feet of the teacher, doing service to him, waiting on him and listening to his words of instruction emanating from his authentic experience. Such words have the effect of a *mantra*. They serve to rouse the aspirant from his age-long slumber — the slumber of ignorance — and tell him that he is not to identify himself with his body, senses and so forth but that he is the same as the Supreme Spirit which is One without a second.[10] This is the first step in the further discipline and it is called *Śravaṇa*. The next step consists in bringing thought to bear upon the teaching imparted by the Guru. This is the stage of reflection and its aim is to secure intellectual conviction. It is called *Manana*. The last step is called *Nididhyāsana* and its object is to transform the teaching which is indirect and mediate into an immediate and direct experience. Thus the operation of the intellect mediates between what is learnt on authority and what finally emerges as a direct experience. Yājñavalkya refers to this point and says: 'The intelligent aspirant after Brahman, knowing about this alone, should attain intuitive knowledge.'[11] Unless it is thus transformed it will not be strong enough to prevail against sense-perception which presents a world of endless variety. No amount of intellectual conviction can stand against the testimony of the senses. Only an equally strong and felt experience, reinforced by hard thinking, can give the quietus to the verdict of sense-perception. Then it will become a way of life, influencing every thought, word and deed. The outward life of such a man will reflect his deep Advaitic convictions even as a clear mirror images the objects that are in front of it.

It must be remembered that this specially Advaitic discipline, like the previous one intended to purify the mind has for its aim only the removal of hindrances. Liberation is not like any other ordinary end to be gained by employing appropriate means. It is, on the other hand, an ever-present reality and consequently ever-attained. To be ever pure, ever enlightened and ever free (*nitya śuddha buddha mukta svabhāva*) is the essence of the self even as heat and light are natural to fire. Just as heat and light are hidden in firewood and therefore concealed from our view, even so the real nature of the self is unmanifest owing to the false identifications bred by primeval ignorance. Just as combustion helps to bring out the latent heat and light of the wood, even so are the disciplines mentioned above are necessary to remove the erroneous notions regarding the nature of the self. When the obstacles are got out of the way, the Self shines in its pristine glory even as the sun or the moon shine in the heavens when the concealing cloud lifts. There is therefore no question of achieving liberation in the manner in which we achieve other ends. It is above the realm of means and ends and consequently above reaching and grasping, above effort and fruition. Thus all talk of man becoming other than what he is, is only figurative. 'The Self', writes Rene Guenon,[12] 'as such is never individualized and cannot be so, for, since it must always be considered under the aspect of the eternity and immutability which are the necessary attributes of Pure Being, it is obviously insusceptible of any particularization which would cause it to be other than itself.'

Strictly speaking, therefore, no change comes upon the self. It is not like a prisoner breaking his fetters and becoming free. In truth the Self is never bound and hence there is no question of its attaining freedom. Bondage and freedom have meaning in the empirical sphere but not in the transcendental. Gauḍapāda makes it quite clear: 'The supreme truth is that there is neither destruction nor creation, neither bondage nor striving, neither aspiration nor release.'[13] 'All our activities, material and spiritual, belong to the realm of ignorance.'[14]

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[10] Compare Gaudapada's statement in his *Karika* I. 16.

अनादि मायया सुप्तो यदा जीवः प्रबुध्यते ।
अजमनिद्रमस्वप्नमद्वैतं बुध्यते तदा ॥

[11] *Br. Up.* IV. iv. 21.

तमेव धीरो विज्ञाय प्रज्ञां कुर्वीत ब्राह्मणः ।

[12] *Man and his Becoming*, p. 25.

It is wrong to think that in liberation the finite self loses itself in the Infinite. There is no merger but only an emergence. 'Just as air, cloud and lightning, rising out of that Ākāśa and reaching the highest light, appear in their own form, so does the serene Being rising out of the body and having reached the Highest Light, appears in its own form.'[15]

This is liberation while yet in the flesh (*jīvanmukti*). Yājñavalkya makes repeated references to this possibility. If only man makes full use of the opportunities that are open to him in this lifetime and puts in the right kind of effort under proper guidance, there is no reason why he should not become free here and now. Death is not a necessary pre-condition for release. After physical death no positive qualification is going to accrue. Nor can it be contended that the presence of the physical body is a hindrance. Even the sense of ownership disappears at this stage and the body is likened by Yājñavalkya to the cast-off slough of the snake. 'Just as the useless slough of the snake is cast off and lies on the ant-hill, so does this body lie.'[16] What counts is the heart-felt experience of the liberated soul. 'This is the eternal glory of the knowledge of Brahman, that it gives one complete satisfaction. It gives the conviction that one is completely blessed. It requires no other witness than the testimony of one's own experience.'[17] He vouches for the authentic character of this experience in emphatic and unequivocal language in his commentary on Vedānta Sūtra IV. i. 15.[18]

When the *prārabda karma* comes to an end the physical body falls and there is no further return to this earth. Transmigration which is the outcome of ignorance comes to an end with the realization of the true nature of the Self. Physical death, to the enlightened man, means nothing more than this. Yājñavalkya rounds off his exposition of the concept of liberation with a peroration on the nature of the Absolute.[19] No wonder that Emperor Janaka gave away his kingdom and himself also to wait upon the sage who took him to the other shore of the ocean of ignorance.

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[13] *Karika*: Vaitathya Prakarana. 32.
न निरोधो न चोत्पत्तिः न बद्धो न च साधकः ।
न मुमुक्षुः नैव मुक्त इत्येषा परमार्थता ॥

[14] Sri Sankara's comment on the above sloka.

[15] *Chandogya Up.* VIII. xii. 3.

[16] *Br. Up.* IV. iv. 7.

[17] Sankara's Commentary on *Br. Up.* IV. iv. 8.

[18] नचैकस्य स्वहृदयप्रत्ययं ब्रह्मवेदनं देहधारणं च अपरेण प्रतिक्षेप्तुं शक्येत ।

[19] *Ibid.*, IV. iv. 22.

So long as there is desire, or want, it is a sure sign that there is imperfection. A perfect, free being cannot have any desire. God cannot want anything. If He desires, He cannot be God, He will be imperfect. So all the talk about God desiring this and that, and becoming angry and pleased by turns, is babies' talk but means nothing. Therefore it has been taught by all teachers, 'Desire nothing, give up all desires and be perfectly satisfied.'

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA.

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(Latu Maharaj)

(A free translation of the Bengali book *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

"It was there, at Sinthi, that I saw your Acharya for the first time. Master loved him dearly and used to say, 'If a hemp-smoker sees another hemp-smoker both become exceedingly glad; when I meet you I am as glad as that.' But Shivanath Shastri used to avoid him. . . . One day he was to come but he did not turn up. Do you know what was the Master's remark on this? 'He said he would come but he did not act up to his word. This is bad indeed. To break one's promise! In this Iron Age to speak the truth is the greatest austerity. One who is not strict in the matter of telling the truth can never reach God. Slackness in this respect spoils spiritual progress outright.' One day the Master asked Shivanath, 'Well Sir, is it a fact that you told somebody that I have become mad? Day and night you think of nothing else but worldly things and you have kept your brain all right; and I, who think of God alone, have gone off my head! What logic is this?' Still he must be regarded as above the common run of men. In the midst of his multifarious duties he stuck to God. Very few indeed can do it."

Beni Babu used to have such functions twice a year; and every time he used to invite the Master. There used to be prayer meetings and congregational singing of devotional songs. Lātu Maharaj accompanied the Master to this place thrice. At the end of one such function Beni Babu wanted to send a big basket of sweets with the Master for Rāmlāldā. The Master following the sannyasin's principle of improvidence, refused to take it. Undaunted, Beni Babu sent it through somebody. He truly loved the Master.

* * *

Now we come to 1883. Accompanied by Lātu, the Master went to Mani Mallick's residence. The Master used to count Mani as one among his special devotees. "One day he said to Mani, 'Look here. You are very calculating. A devotee's attitude is something different. Whatever they earn they spend — of course in good cause — depending on the Lord for the morrow.' Whenever Mani would come to Dakshineswar the first question the Master would ask him was how he came. This the Master did because from his residence Mani would come walking up to Garanhata — quite a good distance for a man of his social standing. From there he would share a hackney carriage with others and come to Baranagore, and then would walk the rest of the distance to Dakshineswar. The Master never forgot to have a funny dig at him by asking how he came. On summer days his face grew crimson. One day the Master told him, 'Mani, why do you take so much pain quite unnecessarily? You could hire a carriage yourself and come.' Do you know what he replied? He said 'If I hire a carriage now, my descendants will like to have a carriage and four. Do you not say yourself, "Householders have to earn and lay by so that they may give in charity and bequeath to children and grandchildren, otherwise they will curse"?' . . . Once Mani went on pilgrimage. Returning he met the Master and narrated his experience in those places. In the course of his talk he remarked, 'But *sadhus* are pests; they give a lot of trouble to the pilgrims by their insistent begging.' At this the Master retorted, 'What! How much do they want — a penny or two? That also do you grudge them! With such a mind one should not go on pilgrimage. Charity is an important part of such visits. *Sadhus* don't earn themselves. So they ask of others. You will monopolize all the enjoyments of the world, and they would be denied everything! Do you mean they would subsist on air only?' . . . There was a great scarcity of water in brother Rakhal's native village. The Master asked Mani to dig a tank there. . . . Mani Mallick lost a son. Coming direct from the cremation ground, he entered the Master's room and broke down. The Master sang a song, Mani's grief was much assuaged. . . . Mani used to spend a good amount in giving education to poor students. . . . The Master once said to him, 'In old age man should retire to a solitary place and engage himself in prayers and vigils. Then he will be rewarded with divine love.'"

* * *

It was in the year 1883 Lātu came in contact with Adhar Chandra Sen, a great devotee of the Master. In later years Lātu Maharaj used to speak highly of Adhar. We collect them here:

"The Master used to take us to Adhar Babu's house in Beniatola, Shobhabazar, Calcutta. He used to call Adhar's house his parlour. Adhar Babu used to invite devotees very often to his house and hold celebrations there quite frequently. His mother too was a great devotee and used to send the seasonal fruits to Dakshineswar for the Master. You know the Master could not take gifts sent by anybody and everybody. But the Master used to hold as very pure, things sent from Adhar Babu's house. In one such celebration, Adharbabu forgot to invite Ramababu, who naturally took offence. Master came to know of it. He called Ram to him and said, 'You know, Ram, Rakhal was asked to invite all the devotees. And it was he who forgot to send you an invitation. He is but a boy. Will you take offence at his fault?' When, however, Adhar came to know of this omission he, a man of such a position, at once, came to Ramababu and apologized. Mark his lack of egoism! . . . Rakhal used to eat cooked rice at his house, at which some orthodox disciples remarked, 'Rakhal should not take cooked rice at a goldsmith's house.' The Master heard of it and said, 'What! Such a remark from a devotee? Does he not know that devotees have no caste, that they form a class by themselves? Food at a devotee's house is very pure.' . . . There, at Adharbabu's house, I saw your novelist Bankim Chatterji for the first time. He had a long talk with the Master. He was a clever man and came to test the Master. Ultimately he had to admit defeat, and, while taking leave said, 'Sir, you will have to come to our house once.' But something happened and he did not send a formal invitation. So the Master did not visit his house... For some time Adharbabu used to visit the Master every day. One day, do you know what he said? 'Tell me what occult powers you have.' Master laughed and said, 'You want to know my occult powers? Why, I put to slumber those Deputy Magistrates, (and Adhar was one) for fear of whom people shake in their shoes.'... He asked Adharbabu not to ride horses, but he did not heed it. He had a fall from the horse and died. When the news of his passing away reached the Master he said, 'One by one my parlours are being closed. This shows the owner also is to go now.'... Adharbabu used to invite great professional singers of devotional songs. It was in his house I heard first the songs of *Chandi*. I was charmed when Rajnarayana sang them.... Adhar used to send his carriage to take the Master to Kalighat. The Master used to enjoy the company of devotees of that place also. ...Immediately after coming to Dakshineswar and prostrating at the feet of the Master, Adharbabu used to fall asleep. Many got annoyed at it. Do you know what the Master replied to their criticism? 'What do you know, you rogues? This is Mother's abode—abode of peace. They come here and sleep—they don't talk about worldly matters. Is that not a hundred times better? They get peace of mind.'"

* * *

1883. Today the devotees are celebrating Sri Ramakrishna's birthday. Last year the devotees celebrated it for the first time. (Lātu Maharaj did not give us any date. We affix it here according to the *Gospel of Sri Rama-*

krishna by 'M' who has given a detailed description of it. For fear of repetition we would give below only what is not mentioned there).

'The Master asked me to bring some Ganges water for his bath. I brought only one bucket. He said that was enough. After taking bath, he went straight to Mother's temple; and we engaged ourselves in cooking. About 150 people were present. Manomohanbabu brought a band of Kirtanias from Konnagore. The Master joined them in singing and dancing. He asked us also to join. The place was the Panchavati. That day in the course of his talk he said, "What do you think? I am not merely a Sannyasin but the King of Sannyasins". The poor were fed that day with what remained.'

* * *

1883. 'One day Brother Rakhal fell ill. Do you know what Master prescribed for him? Said he, "Rakhal, do one thing. Take Jagannath's *prasad*. You will get cured." Rakhal did it and lo! he was cured. Such is the miracle of Jagannath's *prasad*. You of little faith, you don't believe in this. The Master used to instruct us: "Before your meals, take a grain or two of Jagannath's *prasad*."'

* * *

1883. 'Suresh Mitra used to invite the Master and his devotees every year during the Annapurna Puja. Most probably the Master went there thrice. Suresh Babu used to pay great attention to the Master, but every time the Master and others had to wait until late into the night for partaking of *prasad*. So once the Master said, "Look here. None goes hungry when Mother Annapurna comes. That's true. But some get food in time, others very late. Very late at night. Those who get it in time think that Mother is gracious, those who do not get it in time think that they are deprived of Mother's grace. But know it for certain Mother is not partial; people understand Mother's grace according to their needs and intellect."'

* * *

1883. 'Look here. One Dashahara day the Master asked us to worship Mother Ganga. He said to Rakhal, "Mother Ganga is truly a goddess. Today we will worship her." Brother Rakhal did not then look upon her as a deity. Rakhal expressed it frankly. In order to infuse faith in him the Master narrated an incident. One day as he was strolling on the bank of the river, he too was assailed with doubts if she was a goddess. At that moment he heard a continuous sound of blowing of a conch inside the river, but he could not see anything. When, however, the sound came nearer he saw a boy blowing a conch and walking ahead and a goddess following him. Then all doubts about the deityhood of Ganga permanently vanished from his mind. Brother Rakhal, when he heard this, remained agape with wonder for some time and said, "We did not know all this; to us she was as good as a river, a stream of flowing water, and the boatmen dirty its waters." This annoyed the Master who said, "Beware, never dirty its waters." Since then never did anyone see Brother Rakhal dirtying even the bank of Ganga.'

* * *

1883. 'That year I accompanied the Master to witness the famous celebration at Peneti (Panihati). Bhavanath, Rakhal, myself and others went by Ramababu's carriage. Other devotees also went. It was there that I saw Navadvip Goswami for the first time. The Master joined him in *kirtana* (devotional singing and dancing). There we too—we who were accustomed to see the Master in *bhavasamadhis* (ecstasies) every now and then—got afraid at the intensity and duration of his ecstasies. His breathing stopped altogether. His face, eyes, chest, etc. became crimson, the palm of his hand too. Seeing him in such *bhavasamadhi* people made a rush towards him to get the dust of his feet; and it was a hard job for us to protect him against that rush. Everybody wanted to touch the Master and we would not allow it; but nobody would hear us. There was about to be a fracas. At this Ramababu told us aloud, "Lātu, do allow them to touch him, let them be blessed." But we could not lead ourselves to follow his instruction, for had we not seen him many times, groaning with pain when all kinds of people would touch him during *samadhi*? But Ramababu insisted; so we took the Master out of the crowd with great difficulty into the outer parlour of the building. But the crowd followed there too; people were mad. Ramababu saved the situation by collecting a handful of dust and getting it touched by the Master's feet and distributing it to all. Then was it possible for us to give some relief to the Master... Next year too we went there, but this time, by boat. The Master asked if Mother (Holy Mother) would like to go also. She said, "No". At this the Master was glad and praised her highly and said, "Had she gone there people would have criticized us. They would have said: Look there, the hamsa and hamsi, the monk and the nun. She has a fine intellect." This time the Master sat with all to partake of *prasad* and having taken it danced in glee raising both hands.'

'At the close of the Vaishnava celebrations there was a custom to give some money to the Vaishnavas in recognition of their spiritual merits. Generally it was limited to a rupee or two. Once the authorities wanted to pay rupees five to the Master. He, of course, refused to take. But without his knowledge, they made Rakhal accept it. Rakhal purchased sweets and mangoes with the money and came to Dakshineswar with a big basket of fruit and sweets. The Master was naturally annoyed with him and said, "I had rejected it; Rakhal took the money, let him do whatever he likes with it. I have washed my hands off it." And softening a little he turned to Rakhal and said, "You know, without my permission you should never accept anything from anyone. Acceptance of anything by you is as good as my accepting it. Beware of it. Birds and monks are not to hoard."'

(*To be continued*)

WHAT IS MAYA?

(*Continued from page* 417)

asked him to accompany him. The cobbler hesitated thinking that he would be a misfit, but the priest assured him that no one will know about his identity if he but kept silent. The cobbler agreed. At twilight, while the priest was sitting at prayers in the house of his disciple, another brahmana came and asked the priest's servant, to bring his shoes. True to the behest of his master, he made no response though the brahmana repeated his orders. At last, getting annoyed, the brahmana angrily said: "Sirrah, why don't you speak? Are you indeed a cobbler?" The cobbler hearing this, began to tremble with fear, and looking piteously at the priest, said: "O, venerable sir, I am found out. I dare not stay here any longer." So saying he took to his heels. Just so, as soon as Māyā is recognized, she flies away.'

Māyā is powerful no doubt but it can be overcome, says the Vedantist, by those who take recourse to Brahman. Sri Krishna says in the Gītā, 'This My divine Māyā composed of the *guṇas* is very difficult to be crossed. Those who take refuge in Me alone can go beyond it.'[8] Christ too said the same thing, 'Come unto Me, ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.' Māyā, therefore, can be transcended only by realizing the Lord, or Brahman, the true Reality. Until then whatever we may think or do we are still in Māyā and simple denying it would not help matters.

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[8] दैवी ह्येषा गुणमयी मम माया दुरत्यया ।
मामेव ये प्रपद्यन्ते मायामेतां तरन्ति ते ॥
B. Gita, 7. 14.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND INDIAN CULTURE

(Continued from August Issue)

SWAMI PREMESHANANDA

IV

Any attempt to speak about Swami Vivekananda, naturally leads us to think in terms superlative. His portrait brings a very rare phenomenon before us, in every way a grand personality. In America both men and women used to remain spell bound at his magnificent form. In the book *Swami Vivekananda in America, New Discoveries*, you notice how the newspapers and journals of that country have particularly described his penetrating eyes, his kingly bearing and his tartar jaw. It is a divine beauty, that cannot be aptly described, that we see in his portrait. His figure has a divine halo about it.

Now about his voice. We have heard many a sweet voice, but the description that we come across in books about Swamiji's voice far exceeds our imagination. Perhaps Mother 'Yogmāyā' was specially manifest in it. With whomsoever he had occasion to converse they have with one voice declared that they have not heard such a sweet voice anywhere else. The voice of a person, it is said, is one of the sure tests of his character. Swamiji also writes that all the yogis he had met were of sweet voice.

* * *

The traditional mode of education in ancient India was mostly oral. There was no reading and writing as we are accustomed to at the present day. A group of people hereditarily learnt the Vedas by rote. It is their descendants whom we know today as Chowbey, Dubey and Tewari. There were some groups who could memorise all the four Vedas, and they were called Chatur Vedis. People may not believe all these things now. But those who know something of India, of a hundred years ago, have heard about the fame of such geniuses who could remember things which they have heard but once. Prof. Max Mueller by his deep insight has fully accepted that the Indian Brahmins had, by their regular Vedic chanting and strenuous efforts for several generations, attained the power to remember what they had heard but once. In this era, those who came in contact with Swami Vivekananda and came to know about his vast retentive memory power were all wonderstruck. In Swamiji's life there are many such incidents which picturesquely bring forth this faculty of his.

Again for an individual to know and acquire the knowledge of the history of modern culture, the several sciences, Veda, Vedanta and facts about the several cultures of the different countries is a much more surprising achievement than to get by heart one language and one thought current, with the different trends therein. Those who have studied the life of Swami Vivekananda thoroughly, will not have missed to note that he was not only a master of Brahmavidya, but also of the sciences of the world. This kind of uncommon power and genius have not been heard of anywhere else in the world.

From time immemorial mankind has been divided into little groups. Each of these groups acquired some special knowledge in some branch or other, in philosophy or science, after years of struggle and learning. With the help of modern science today when the opportunities to come together and know each other expanded, there arose a tendency in one group of people to compare themselves with others and to look down upon other groups as inferior to them. Taking advantage of this, the priestly class, who were trying to entrench and establish their glory more firmly, were creating feuds among the people. At this time there was the dire necessity of a person of incomparable prowess who could gauge things properly and to direct man onto the right path. To save mankind God fulfilled these needs through Swami Vivekananda. Unfortunately very few people have understood this great mission of Swamiji. But the movement of the ideal of universal brotherhood and equality amongst men, has been inaugurated and is sure to succeed. That is why Swamiji declared that the great spiritual potency in man has been roused this time from its age-old stupor.

V

I shall here relate some of my views regarding Indian culture. In our Puranas there is mention of the four yugas ; *Satya*, *Treta*, *Dwāpara* and *Kali*. But we cannot say that the general conception of the people regarding these yugas is quite correct. Undoubtedly there is sufficient proof that there were a group of people in ancient times who dedicated their lives in the pursuit of truth and achieved the highest pinnacle of spiritual life. But this group formed a very negligible minority of the world population. But as a result of a long period of intense thought and struggles there came into being a community of Rishis called Aryans. A glimpse of the amount of effort that was put in to bring about this revolution can be had in the *pauranic* story of Parasurama's life. It was after many a feud and battle when the Brahmanas, representing the thinking power, and the Kshatriyas, embodying the basis of the power of activity, united, during the time of Sri Ramachandra that the present form of Indian culture began to formulate and express itself. It was when the Kshatriyas, remaining under the guidance of the Brahmanas, began to do their duty, (*svadharma*) which was to protect the civilized man from injury, as a means to attaining the goal of life that the highest Knowledge began to express itself even in the midst of their life of intense activity. It was when among the Kshatriyas the full development of both the gross body and the subtle mind — which are a prime necessity for the attainment of Brahma Vidya — set in, that the truths of Vedanta began to manifest themselves in their life. That is why the Lord says in the Gita : 'This the Rajarshis knew,' i.e., the Kshatriyas were able to experience the full knowledge of Vedanta even in the midst of their life of activity.

After the Buddhistic upheaval the knowledge of Brahman learnt according to the traditional Vedic method was almost lost in the country. It is generally believed that what little remains of it now can be put into practice only by Sannyasins who have renounced, and not easily assimilable by the common man. Realization of the knowledge of Brahman, Jivanmukti — these things now, at the first instance, look like sheer improbabilities. But from the study of the scriptures and *purāṇas* it can be proved that only by the gradual process of unfoldment, expansion of human life, Knowledge dawns in the end. As there is no disposition in society at the present moment whereby man could develop in all directions, the ultimate aim of man's life, the realization of Truth, appears a near impossibility — a Utopia.

The vast difference between man and man that is now markedly manifest everywhere — in living, food, habits and behaviour, added to the utter disregard which one individual feels towards the other — was not at all in the experience of the Kshatriya boys in the days of yore. A Kshatriya boy did not experience any difficulty, any want. His needs were all fulfilled, and when the needs of life were easily fulfilled naturally man's virility is directed to think of attaining something of higher value— provided he had the opportunity for the proper type of education. There were excellent arrangements for the Kshatriyas, even from childhood, for building up strong physiques so that they may be fit for the protection of the society. Further as the fruit of their hereditary righteous conduct, the tendencies of their gross and subtle bodies naturally flowed towards higher and nobler things. Consequently if but once they became aware of the difference between the Real and the unreal it was not so difficult for them with their strength of body and mind, to separate the two and choose the Real. Though the *varṇāshrama dharma* is practically dead in India, yet amongst the families of the Kāyasthas, of Bengal, some glimpse of this Kshatriya culture could be seen even now. Swami Vivekananda, even from his early childhood, was not kept under any restraint. And because of this freedom the hereditary Kshatriya qualities in him began to manifest in greater and greater measure. Because of his great valour and courage the Lord placed the responsibility of spreading the ancient Brahma Vidya in the world, for its edification, upon him.

If we examine the life of Swamiji we can boldly assert that we find evidence of that Kshatriya valour which we see in Sri Krishna but after him was not seen in the life of any man. He moved freely in a wealthy country like America with hundreds of rich fairy-like beauties around him, but there has not been one who could point a finger at him and say that he was attracted in the least by the one or the other in his whole lifetime. Perhaps it was to establish this truth firmly, by Divine will, as it were, that some jealous and vested interests in India and the West tried to besmear his character with false and vile propaganda. But his friends and admirers, who were his constant companions everywhere, gave a tough fight and proved it all a lie by their personal testimony, and cleared all doubts regarding his immaculate character, once and for ever. We wonder how many in the history of the world did receive such honour and adoration and how many were able to discard it all like a piece of straw! We have neither heard nor read in any book about a second person who had been able to do so.

VI

For a proper understanding of the purpose of the lives of great men, we have to ponder deeply over the circumstances of their times. The incidents of Swamiji's life, when we gauge them through this viewpoint, are especially so closely and completely knitted with the history of mankind. Mankind's most covetable knowledge, Brahma Vidya, was fully revealed in India as there were arrangements in the land to formulate life in conformity with this ideal. But this facility was limited to a small number of people. The reason for this limitation was the absence of the two means of communication viz., easy transport and the vehicle of a common and easily understandable language. Being deprived of this privilege, the masses of India lived like hewers of wood and drawers of water for the Brahmanas and Kshatriyas. Observing this pitiable condition of the masses Lord Buddha brought the Brahma Vidya to the door of the high and the low, to one and all. This had the effect of rousing the masses, at least for once, to a sense of their equality with other human beings. After this upheaval the country had to pass through many conflicts, turmoils and the like, which put it in a disorderly condition. Then came Śankara and Ramanuja and dedicated their lives to retrieve the Vedic culture and to restore it to its pristine glory. The one danger however which follows the universalization of culture is that it begins to get perverted, decay and in the end tends towards destruction. So, much later, again a grand synthesis was made by Sri Gauranga evolving the generally beneficial discipline of devotion and by granting equal rights for its (path of devotion) practice to one and all, just as Buddha did before him. This Bhakti cult not only saved the masses but also prevented the further annihilation of the Vedic religion.

Almost at the same period in the other part of the world there was a new horizon in its wake. And it had the effect of sending the nations of Europe and America into a frenzy of new effort. In India the strenuous efforts to attain freedom from subservience to nature had led to the discovery of Brahma Vidya. In the West the herculean efforts of the people to bring nature under control had the tremendous success in the material sciences. The result of it has been that humanity has come closer together today and it looks as if it is going to blend into one society. Unfortunately, however, as there was no union between the (outer) material sciences with the (inner) spiritual science, mankind's destruction appeared inevitable (and the two great world wars have proved this). Swamiji with his Divine foresight visualised that if the basic truth of creation was not thrown broadcast to man it was possible that mankind in its mad frenzy of success in the material sciences would prove itself the cause of its extinction some day. Therefore he presented this Brahma Vidya in a way as could be understood by and be useful to all people and thus brought about an ultimate fulfilment of the work started by Lord Buddha.

(*To be continued*)

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA—THE SYMBOL OF MODERN MAN

MALLIKA GUPTA

A rock is thrown into a sleepy, stagnant pool of water and for some time afterwards ripples and eddies are seen on the surface, indicating the impact of the striking force on the deep water below. This is a very simple analogy, but it serves in a small way as an illustration of what happens when a spiritual Power strikes this earth of ours, causing dynamic changes in our thinking, giving us new perspectives, and focussing a flood of light on all our problems. It stirs up all spheres of thought and action, and permeates every field of endeavour. These visible effects are indicative of the deeper and more subtle reactions, the hidden upheavals, which take place in the undercurrent of the spiritual life of humanity. Such "attacks" on sluggish, befuddled and deluded humanity are made, from time to time, when spiritual values have declined to their lowest level, and the impact is sometimes felt for many centuries afterwards. In order that the Power may have full play amongst us It assumes a human body and functions as a mortal being, much like any one of us. These visitations of God are known as Avatars.

When God thus embodies himself in different ages to teach men by his own living examples, we see that he brings along with him his own companions, or his "group." These great free souls accompany the World-Teacher and form part of his ministry even after the Teacher has left this world. Besides these close companions, there are others who are associated with the World-Teacher and through whom also he gives his teachings. These latter may be called the archetypes, or prototypes of humanity, representing as they do the various types of persons who are, even today, struggling to realize their true nature and the nature of the world around them. If this were not so, and if we could not in some small way at least identify ourselves with the Avatars, could the advent of such World-Teachers benefit us to any great extent? In his dealings with his companions and associates the Avatar teaches men generally, and he reveals his identity to them, for they are able to understand it.

The life of the Avatar is lived like an intense drama and when we read it the characters are indelibly impressed upon our minds as if we were witnessing a play. In the life of Sri Rama, several millennia B.C., we find various types of persons through whom he taught his message. Similarly, in the life of Sri Krishna we read of the impact of that Avatar on the multitudinous and diversified types of characters who were associated with him. In the life of Christ we find that he had his close, devoted disciples; apart from these he taught us through many other characters, such as the fallen, the wicked, the doubters, the betrayers and those of other behaviour patterns.

In the life of the most recent World-Teacher or Avatar, Sri Ramakrishna, we again find the same phenomenon. It has been poetically described that Sri Ramakrishna, like a versatile dramatist, wrote the play, cast the characters and coached them in their parts, and then stood aside in the wings for the curtain to rise on his play before he disappeared from the theatre. There were certainly a great variety of types of people who were associated with Sri Ramakrishna and his life with them unfolds like a vibrant drama. There were top scholars, preachers of religion, renowned pundits, scions of wealthy families, business men, Government officials, teachers, lawyers and judges, men of science, University students, writers and litterateurs, musicians, actors, doctors, in short men from all walks of life. There were those in the highest positions as also the lowest of the lowly. And as humanity is much the same today as it was one hundred or so years ago we may, in fact, say that Sri Ramakrishna contacted a cross-section of modern humanity. A careful reading of his life reveals the many different types of persons, of various tendencies and characteristics, he had come in contact and through his teachings and advice to them we can learn great lessons. For we often find that our problems were their problems and our search for truth, same as theirs.

It is interesting to think of the associates of Sri Ramakrishna as the archetypes, or prototypes of humanity as it is at present, and the close companions—those ever-free souls—as the Symbols of the ideal of modern, or future man. Towering above all of them stands Swami Vivekananda, who as the youth, Narendra, may be called the Symbol of the finest in modern man, and the ideal of future generations—cultured, artistic, generous and full of compassion for his fellow human beings, well-versed in general knowledge with a University education as background, a serious student of philosophy, both Eastern and Western, yet with big, unanswered questions deep within him : 'What is the meaning of life ? ', 'Is there such a Being as God ; if so, why should *I* not be able to see Him ? ', a believer in what he himself actually experienced, otherwise almost an agnostic, a breaker of traditions, possessor of a young and original mind, both receptive and questioning. Is that not a thinking and cultured modern man's stand and approach to life ?

The impact of the World-Teacher, Sri Ramakrishna, on this symbol of modern man can be understood best by a study of the life, writings, and teachings of Swami Vivekananda, and of other Ramakrishna-Vivekananda literature. We may follow his thoughts, his doubts, his arguments, and his final convictions. We may see in a clear, modern and precise perspective the teachings of the great Mystic, Sri Ramakrishna in them.

Sri Ramakrishna once told Narendra that he should test him 'as the money-changers test their coins' and that he should not accept him until he had tested him thoroughly. This challenge that Narendra should test him first to find out whether his teachings were 'legal tender' or not is significant and Narendra, whose mind was full of the logic of both Eastern and Western savants, did test Sri Ramakrishna more than any one else did. Although he loved Sri Ramakrishna dearly, as a person, he doubted him at first on many points and was most critical of his teachings.

When Narendra went to Sri Ramakrishna he used to jeer at the idea that God is manifest in all beings and things. He maintained that God, being Infinite, could have no parts, and that He was beyond words and thought. Sri Ramakrishna said that however Infinite God might be He could and did manifest Himself through man, but that this could not be explained by analogy ; but had to be realized. He said that God's manifestation is greater in man than in any other being in the universe, and that His manifestation is greatest in the Avatar. He once said, 'Does God exist only when you close your eyes (i.e. in meditation) and cease to exist when you open them ? ' He also said that one could not comprehend everything about God but that one could see God Himself, in an Avatar. As an illustration he said that in order to see the Ganges you do not have to see it from Hardwar to Gangasagar. If you have seen one part of it, it is sufficient to say that you have seen the Ganges. But Narendra would argue that it was preposterous to think that God, the Infinite, could become man and be conditioned as a mortal being. Once Dr. Sarkar, one of the physicians who was attending on Sri Ramakrishna, was gyrating on the subject of the Avatar which he did not believe in. Sri Ramakrishna said, 'How can we be certain, with our limited intelligence, that God *cannot* assume a human form? The Absolute and the Relative are the two aspects of Reality, or God.'

We give here some of Narendra's further doubts. He did not at first believe in the power of the Divine Mother, the Deity Sri Ramakrishna worshipped in the temple of Dakshineswar. He would also often say that the spiritual visions of Sri Ramakrishna were mere hallucinations. He doubted the divine origin of the scriptures, a basic belief with the Hindu, and he once said of the Gita, 'Who knows, it could have been written by Krishna, or anyone else, for that matter!' When Narendra came to know that Sri Ramakrishna could not bear the touch of money he put him to test by secretly placing a silver coin under his mattress. Sri Ramakrishna sat on the bed but no sooner had he touched the bed than he jumped up, as if stung by a wasp.

Narendra once noticed at the house of a devotee in Calcutta that Sri Ramakrishna refused to take a glass of water brought to him by one of the persons and requested that a fresh glass be brought by someone else. He had heard that Sri Ramakrishna could not eat or drink anything that had been touched by an impious person (because he offered those things mentally to the Divine Mother within him before taking them) but Narendra could not believe that Sri Ramakrishna could know the impurity in character of a perfect stranger. So, when all the guests had left the house Narendra returned and questioned one of the servants about the man who had brought the glass of water to Sri Ramakrishna. It happened that this person was the younger brother of that man. He said, "I do not like to speak against my elder brother, but unknown to anyone here he is leading a very immoral life. Only I know about it." That was enough. Narendra went on his way, perplexed, but convinced that Sri Ramakrishna could know the inmost nature of people, even though they be perfect strangers to him! Thus did he test the Master in every way.

One of the greatest and perplexing ideas to Narendra's understanding of Sri Ramakrishna was his disbelief in the fact that God could take the form of a man, become an Avatar. Sri Ramakrishna said that through the Avatar one could get a glimpse of the Reality, of God. He said, 'Suppose there is a high brick wall on the other side of which is a beautiful garden stretching to infinity. You cannot see the garden because of the wall, but if even a small hole is made in the wall you can see through to the other side. The Avatar is like the hole in the wall and through him one can understand something of the Reality beyond the boundaries of the human mind and senses.' Many people believed Sri Ramakrishna to be an Avatar and sometimes spoke vehemently on the subject. But Narendra told Sri Ramakrishna, 'Thousands of people may call you God, but I will not do so until I *know* it to be true.' Even when Sri Ramakrishna was lying ill at the Cossipore garden house Narendra, wrestling with his doubts, was thinking: 'If now, now, while his body is so weakened by this wasting disease, if now he can say that he is the Avatar, God in a human form, I will believe him.' However, he naturally did not express this questioning. But a little later Sri Ramakrishna turned to him and very softly and sweetly said, 'Naren, he who was Rama and he who was Krishna is *here* (pointing to himself), as Ramakrishna and that not only in your Vedantic sense,' meaning that in a special sense God *embodies* himself in the Avatar.

Does it not seem when we read of all these things that we, ourselves, were questioning, unable to fathom how God could take a human form and go through, apparently, a life of birth, decay and death? How often do such questions come to our minds, and how frequently do doubts arise in our thinking about the wonderful happenings in the life of Sri Ramakrishna. It is as if Narendra had asked all those questions for us, as if he had expressed all our doubts, and tested everything for us, and had also got the correct answers for us. But all these doubts were completely annihilated before his Master left the mortal coil, so much so that later, after achieving world-wide fame as a spiritual teacher, Swami Vivekananda said of Sri Ramakrishna, 'If there has been a word of truth, that has fallen from my lips and has benefited mankind anywhere in the world I lay no claim to it, it is all his; only the mistakes are mine.' When such identity of thought and word are there how are we to differentiate at all between the disciple and the Master? Did not Sri Ramakrishna, in his mysterious way at the Cossipore garden house transfer his spiritual powers to Naren saying, 'Today, I have given you all my spiritual treasures?' Sri Ramakrishna further enjoined upon his disciple somewhat in this vein: With this treasure you will go out into the world and will teach men. You will help them break the shackles of their ignorance and awaken them to their divine nature. You will re-establish true religion, the truth of all religions, which is the Divinity within every man.

Thus the World-Teacher shows by his own life and through the lives of his own group and other associates the way out of the quagmire of ignorance, defeat and death. His life is a book of reference — he gives the hints, he shows the examples, he points out the way to reach the goal. It is for us to open our minds and hearts and accept the 'spiritual treasures' bequeathed by Sri Ramakrishna to us, through Swami Vivekananda, the symbol of modern man.

THE GREAT EQUATION

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

S. K. GUPTA

Aaruni: It has been enjoined that he who realizes Self is redeemed — so Self (Ātman) is never used in any figurative sense in the Veda.

Śwetaketu: But even the use of the expression redemption may be figurative. The injunction may mean that he who knows the *Pradhana*, the ultimate material cause of the physical universe, attains near redemption. Just as a man at the commencement of his journey may say I have reached my destination, just to indicate that he would be there quickly. So secondary or figurative use of words is quite common.

Aaruni: You are merely wasting your efforts by interpreting every saying of the Vedas in a figurative way. I have already stated that the knowledge of this One Principle leaves nothing unknown, implying thereby that everything else is identical with That Principle. That is the great equation. Arguments will lead you nowhere. If you are interested in knowing the means to attain the highest end of man, you must have a reasoned faith in the Vedas. It is proved on the authority of the Vedas that the Cause, the generator of the physical world is a Conscious Principle. It evolves into matter through Its Own Idea and Will, first emanating as Energy, which in turn melts into Water and condenses into solid Matter.

Aaruni: The living organisms that you see, whether mobile or static are of three varieties, those that have their germs in eggs, like birds, fish, reptiles etc., those that are conceived in ovaries, like human beings and animals and those that sprout from earth — the entire vegetable kingdom. The first two varieties have mobility, while the third is static. All forms of life can be brought under any of these three categories.

In that effulgent Principle 'Sat' lay merged the Life Principle, the Principle of motion, and the plan and pattern of previously dissolved universes, as one undistinguished whole, as Pure Spirit. The diversification of the One into many was not yet completed. So It thought 'I have assumed the forms, the structures, of the three subtle luminous principles Fire, Water and Earth. Let Me now be gross, be manifest. Being particularized through these subtle principles, I as Jiva (the Life Principle) shall permeate into the phenomenal structures and manifest Myself into particular names and particular forms, so that each body could be designated with an individual name.' It presented Itself as multiple structures of the world of phenomena, the prehensile universe of percepts and concepts. Thus did the One become Many.

Śwetaketu : Sir, the 'Sat' is Free and Omniscient. There seems to be no apparent reason, why such an Entity, should with forethought, will to enmesh Itself in physical bodies, the source and support of infinite misery. Surely there is no compulsion. Why should It wilfully choose to throw Itself into this vale of tears ?

Aaruni : Precisely, your question would have been apt if It had willed to suffer in Its essential form. But that is not so. It is only as Jīva (the Life Principle) that It willed to manifest Itself. And what is this Jīva ? It is only a reflection of that Radiant Principle, like the reflection of a human body on a mirror or of the Sun or other luminous celestial bodies on a transparent surface like that of water. It is caused by the assembly of subtle material principles like mind, intellect, ego, senses etc. It shines through the radiance of Pure Spirit, which Itself remains unbound. The infinite and imponderable power of Spirit remains unaffected. The contact with matter is illusory and not real. It is only the failure to see through this illusion that is responsible for all egoistic concepts like 'I am happy, I am sorry, I am stupid etc.' The essential 'I' is nothing of the kind. Its entry into a physical body is in the nature of a reflection. If the mirror is uneven or soiled, the image would be distorted — but the face which it reflects will not lose its shape. If the water is ruffled, the sun will have numerous reflections but the sun does not become many. It has been said 'the Sun is the Universal Eye, being of the essence of the optical sense, but it is not contaminated by optical defects of individuals. So is the One Universal Inner Essence not affected by external miseries of individuals.' The Kathopaniṣad says, 'Like ether, it is eternal and all-pervasive.'

Śwetaketu : If the Jīva, the human ego is nothing but an image, all this talk about this world and the next, moral order and religious experience etc., becomes infructuous.

Aaruni : As a phenomenon, it is truly a non-entity, just a name, a form of expression but essentially as an entity informed by Spirit, it is real. I have already said that all these mutations are just nominal. All effects and all language giving expression to them, have truth in so far as they are essentially 'Sat'. But if you emphasize on the phenomenal aspect of these, leaving out of count, the noumenal core, they become unreal. These things cannot be reasoned out — the more the dualists try to reason out, the greater becomes the conflict between one School of Thought and another. The One has been realized, the many are merely argued about.

Śwetaketu : Very well sir, let us accept the authority of the Scriptures. Seeing that they speak of Truth, visualized, realized by a long line of seers. Attempts to reason It out no doubt involve clash of arguments and become infructuous. But father, what troubles me, is how does this Subtle, Eternal Principle, through Its three equally Subtle Primordial Structures ramify into this gross world of experience ? How do Idea and Will objectify themselves ? How do the three subtle metaphysical entities metamorphose themselves into gross physical ones ?

(*To be continued*)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Swami Satswarupananda's article 'Swami Vivekananda and the Building of Modern India' is its third and the concluding instalment, the first instalment appeared in our August number and the second in the last issue.

Swami Budhananda is a former Editor of the *Vedanta Kesari* and is at present Assistant Minister at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York.

Sri P. M. Bhaskaran Nambudiripad, M.A., M. Litt., is a research scholar in philosophy, Madras.

Sri M. K. Venkatarama Iyer is a retired Professor of Philosophy, Annamalai University and a regular contributor to the *Vedanta Kesari.*

'Swami Vivekananda and Indian Culture' by Swami Premeshananda forms a free translation of his talks taken down in Bengali.

Srimati Mallika Gupta is from Calcutta.

'The Great Equation', by Sri S. K. Gupta, Calcutta, is the third instalment of the series.

NATURAL DISASTERS

In recent months heavy tolls of life, both human and animal, have been taken by natural disasters such as earthquake, as in Yugoslovia, and land-slide, as in Italy, latter of which resulted in the overflow of thousands of tons of water over the Vaiont dam and completely wiped out a hamlet. And this happened not in the so-called backward countries but in countries of Europe considered to be advanced. What then to speak of cyclone and flood havocs which are almost annual calamities everywhere! Should this not open our eyes to recognize a higher Being whom we in our arrogance of advanced civilization or progression have completely forgotten or are forgetting? It should make us wise at least after the event, but, the unfortunate part of it is, it rarely leaves any permanent dent, except perhaps on the very close relations of the sufferers. And even in them, again, time heals these wounds, probably leaving only unrecognizable scars. Why does it happen? What do the worldly-wise say? Do they mope all their lives for it? No, they do not; and they have no explanation for it.

But if the Vedantin says this is Māyā, the worldlywise is irritated and makes a caricature of the idea of Māyā. He asks why does the Hindu who says it is all Māyā wail so much on the death of a relation? Does he mean to say that the Hindu who believes in Māyā should turn into stock or stone? How preposterous a suggestion it is? Only he who has gone beyond the body idea is entitled to be unmoved by anything happening outside, not excepting his own body. Yet, on the other hand, remember that he alone really feels who sees everything as Brahman, who has realized God and not the man who goes about only talking about brotherhood of man. So Māyā is not a theory to hide one's drawbacks and imperfections but is a statement of facts. A man is not affected by a disaster to a person unrelated to him, though he may be a neighbour, whereas if he hears some calamity has happened to his own near and dear one, though living thousands of miles away, it is possible that he may die of the shock or go out of mind or be stunned into stupidity. How does the man of the world explain this death which is the same phenomenon but acts in two different ways? He says it is attachment and the Vedantin calls it Māyā. Why then should anyone have any objection to the use of that word?

To return to our subject again, it is incumbent upon us to do a reassessment of values. The world had had enough of this God-denying and we think it has already paid its price in the form of the two great wars and bloodshed. It is high time that we turned a new leaf in the world of our thought, where science could flourish under the benign influence of religion.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

HINDUISM: By R. C. Zaehner. Pub. Oxford University Press, Madras-2. Pp. 272. Price Rs. 6.

Prof. Zaehner, Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions in the University of Oxford, approaches his subject with understanding and sympathy. He points out in the Introduction, that Hinduism is not a religion of the type the West is familiar with. It is, he explains, a way of life *plus* a Law of God which refuses to be formulated in a creed or set of dogmas. He quotes Al-beruni on the catholic outlook of the average Hindu "who might fight with words" but never with lethal weapons in matters of religion. He studies Hinduism in four historical periods: the Vedic, the Upanishadic, the age of religions and gods and last, the era beginning with the advent of the British (and still running), of the dissolution of the ossifying elements and assertion of the spiritual values lying hidden in the core of Hinduism.

One is happy to see that the treatment here of this vast subject is generally fair unlike in most of the treatises of the kind from Western universities. Perhaps one could do with fewer kudos for the 'services' of the Christian missionaries in the renaissance of India. The author is surely not right in holding that the Purusha Sukta in the Rig Veda points to the existence of human sacrifice in the Vedic society (p. 58). The Upanishads are certainly not "speculative texts loosely strung together." (p. 97). They are recorded perceptions into the nature of the Reality by different Seers approaching from different standpoints. We are not sure if the writer is correct in observing that the Ideals of the Ramakrishna Order are at variance with the outlook of the Paramahamsa. (P. 218). He has, unfortunately, missed the real significance of *Kali* whom he stigmatises as the 'universal murderess'. (P. 191). *Kali* kills what holds up the progress of the evolving soul, cuts asunder the bonds of Ignorance with her shining sword of Knowledge. We have pointed out these weak or black spots in order that the author might see his way to remove them in the next edition of the book which is otherwise readable, informative and balanced.

M. P. PANDIT.

THE UPANISHADS: Translated by Max Muller, Parts I and II. Dover Publications, New York 14. Price Two dollars each.

Much water has flowed beneath the Upanishadic bridge since Max Muller brought out his translations of the main Upanishads in two parts, the first in 1879 and the second in 1884, in the *Sacred Books of the East* series. Whatever may be said regarding the approach of the professor to Indian scriptures, particularly the missionary motive of the Christian propagandist that runs now in undertones, now in overtones, there is no denying the fact that his labours served to draw the attention of the Indian intelligentsia to these ancient texts. His very accusing finger at "the much that is not only unmeaning, artificial and silly but even hideous and repellent" in the Upanishads and allied literature, served as a challenge that drew many Indian minds to a deeper study and exposition of the true meaning of these scriptures. The long introduction prefacing the translations has now no more than historical interest. Most of his posers have been effectively dealt with by the many scholars, both Indian and European, that followed him.

All the same, the publication of the volumes in the present form at comparatively cheaper cost, is welcome. The translator's annotations and arguments for the readings he has chosen are of considerable value to the serious student. The first part contains translations of the Chhandogya, Kena, Aitareya, Kaushitaki and Isha Upanishads. The second contains Katha, Mundaka, Taittiriya, Brihadaranyaka, Svetasvatara, Prashna and Maitrayani Upanishads.

Though the translations are somewhat cumbersome, the work has undoubtedly a great reference value.

M. P. PANDIT.

GANDHIJI'S TEACHINGS AND PHILOSOPHY: By C. Rajagopalachari. Pub. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay-7. Pp. 35. Price 75 nP.

This is a reprint of three lectures delivered by Sri C. Rajagopalachariar on "Gandhian Philosophy" under the auspices of an endowment created by the Union Ministry of Education. They are valuable for the background they offer for understanding the philosophy of the Mahatma. The eminent lecturer, one of his chief lieutenants is perfectly justified in equating Gandhian philosophy as having had its roots in Vedanta.

This short but extremely illuminating monograph brings us very near to the Mahatma and to the ideals for which he had dedicated himself.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

AN INTRODUCTION TO SANKARA'S THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE: By Dr. N. K. Devaraja. Pub. Motilal Banarsi Dass, Varanasi. Pp. 225. Price Rs. 12.

The learned author has introduced his work as an essay in exposition dealing with Sankara's standpoint on certain important epistemological problems. Herein, he has revised the approved work of his previous research on the 'criteriology in Sankara' which he submitted for his D.Phil. degree at the Allahabad University. Apart from the high academic standard and a convincing grasp over the subject throughout, the following are some of the notable features: (a) The book is highly authoritative and reliable for its exhaustive references and appropriate parallels from the works of the great Acharya and other allied works of Vedanta. (b) The author's study of Sankara and his polemics has been very deep. (c) Further, analogical passages from such western thinkers as Plato, Kant, Hegel, Bradley, Bergson, given in the book can be of much use to the students of philosophy (particularly, his clear and distinguishing analysis between Sankara's and Kant's idealism, towards the end of the book, is highly commendable). (d) Lastly, the author's venture to intrepret Sankara in a very practical and realistic way, needs special mention. A further comparative study with other schools of Indian philosophy in the context, (specially with Nyaya) would have still more enriched the discussion.

BR SUDHANGSHU.

NEWS AND REPORTS

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, CEYLON

REPORT FOR JAN. 1960—MAR. 1962.

The Colombo Centre which is the Headquarters of the Ceylon Branch, carried on, in addition to the administrative activities of the Mission, its varied cultural and religious activities during the period. The Sunday Religious class had 275 children and 10 honorary teachers on the roll. The birthdays of Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda and Sivaratri and other festivals were celebrated. Its Library has got 2,200 books, and the reading room receives 25 monthly and 4 weekly magazines, 4 daily and 2 bi-weekly newspapers. An International Cultural Centre was opened on 15th October, 1962, its object being to provide accommodation for students, and guests and conducting classes on cultural and religious subjects. Its Madam at Katargama, a famous pilgrim centre served the pilgrims of all religious denominations who visited Katargama. The average number of such pilgrims was more than 200 on week days and nearly 600 during week-ends. The Mission provides for the education of 9,069 students with the assistance of 311 teachers in 26 schools. It maintains a students' Home (Orphanage) for Boys and two Homes (Orphanages) for Girls with a total strength of 110 inmates and runs three hostels with a strength of 240 inmates. The management thanks the donors, subscribers and others who helped them and appeal for generous contribution from the public to fulfil their immediate needs which are permanent funds for maintaining the Ashrama, orphanages, the Madam at Katargama and construction of a Swami Vivekananda Centenary Hall.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS IN EUROPE

The Geneva Centre has been organizing Vivekananda centenary celebrations in four countries, Germany, Italy, Holland and Switzerland. In Germany the Indo-German Society of Stuttgart has been taking a lead in organizing meetings for the celebrations and on the occasion of the Seminar the Society organized in March at Bad Boll, near Stuttgart Swami Nityabodhananda was invited to speak on Vivekananda and the Unity of Religions. At the end of November he is going to attend the celebrations organized at Bremen.

In Italy (in Rome), the friends and admirers of Vivekananda arranged a meeting in April last where Prof. Fano of the Rome University and Swami Nityabodhananda were the chief speakers. For the first time the Four Yogas of Vivekananda have appeared in the Italian language in the month of August as a feature of the centenary celebrations and Swami Nityabodhananda has contributed a Preface to the Italian Edition.

In Holland the centenary was organized in three cities, Amsterdam, Amersfoort and the Hague in the month of June. In Amsterdam the meeting was held at the Institute for the Tropics and many professors of the university and other lovers of India were present. At Amersfoort the gatherings were held at The International School of Philosophy and at the Hague at the Institute for Social Studies.

The 29th and 30th of November have been fixed for the Geneva celebrations. Prof. Lacombe, Professor of Comparative Philosophy of the Sorbonne University, France and two Professors of the Geneva University will be the chief speakers. The Geneva State is offering a reception on the occasion. At Bern too celebrations are in view on the same scale as that of Geneva in the first half of December.

IN AMERICA

With the co-operation of the Embassy of India in Washington, D.C. and the moral as well as the financial support of the Government of India it was possible for the Committee, set up for the purpose, to celebrate the 100th birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda.

The centenary was celebrated at the Auditorium of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. on 4th October. It was attended by a large number of Indian as well as foreign nationals including some of the senior officials of the U.S. Government, Presidents and Professors of universities and representatives of different embassies.

The programme commenced with the singing of a devotional song and a song on Swami Vivekananda by Mrs Balasubramanian accompanied by Mr K. V. Rao of the University of Maryland on Tabla. Ambassador B. K. Nehru gave the welcome address. Swami Nikhilananda of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, spoke on the life and essential teachings of Swami Vivekananda. Dr Grayson Kirk, President of Columbia University, New York, who was the guest speaker, addressed the gathering and emphasized the importance of Vivekananda's thoughts for the world of today and the need for greater understanding on the international level. The meeting concluded with general remarks and a vote of thanks by Dr Kurt Leidecker, Professor of Philosophy at the Mary Washington College of the University of Virginia, Fredericksburg.

Dr S. M. S. Chari, First Secretary (Education), Embassy of India, who was in charge of the centenary celebration, made the opening remarks about the centenary and introduced the speakers.

. . . . Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

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PANCADAŚĪ

तम:प्रधानप्रकृतेस्तद्भोगायेश्वराज्ञया । वियत्पवनतेजोंऽबुभुवो भूतानि जज्ञिरे ॥ १८ ॥

Tadbhogāya, for the experience of that (*prājña*) ; *tamaḥpradhāna*, predominently *tāmasic* ; *prakṛtéḥ*, of the *prakṛti* ; *īśvarājñaya*, by the command of the Lord ; *viyat*, *ākāśa* (ether) ; *pavana*, air ; *tejaḥ*, fire ; *ambu*, water ; *bhuvaḥ*, earth ; *bhūtāni*, subtle elements ; *jajñire*, came into being.

[*Note* : Having mentioned about the causal body, the text, before going to describe the subtle body, depicts the process of projection of the universe.]

18. The subtle elements,[1] *ākāśa* (ether), *vāyu* (air), *tejas* (fire), *āpaḥ* (water), and *pṛthivī* (earth), came into being (one from the other in this order) from *prakṛti* in which *tamas* was predominent, by the command[2] of the Lord, for the sake of the experience[3] of the prājñas (jīvas).

[1] The subtle elements are the uncompounded pure elements (*apancīkṛta*). It is the opinion of the Vedantins that these elements cannot be grasped by the senses when they are in their pure uncompounded form. Only when they are compounded together in a particular proportion can they be perceptible. For example, the water we see has in it also the other four elements, though their proportion is very small.

[2] Here command means mere wish or thought of the Lord which is described in such Śruti passages as : तदैक्षत बहुस्यां प्रजायेयेति । (*Ch. Up*. 6. 2. 3) स ईक्षत लोकान्नुसृजा इति । (*Aitareya Up*. 1. 1).

[3] The whole creation is for the experience of the jīvas and they enjoy or suffer, according to the result of their past actions, until liberation is achieved.

सत्त्वांशै पंचभिस्तेषां क्रमाद्धीन्द्रियपंचकम् । श्रोत्रत्वगक्षिरसनघ्राणाख्यमुपजायते ॥ १९ ॥

Teṣām, of those (ether and other subtle elements) ; *pancabhiḥ*, by the five ; *sattvāṁśaiḥ*, by the sattva particles ; *kramāt*, in order ; *śrotra*, the organ of sound ; *tvak*, the organ of touch ; *akṣi*, the organ of sight ; *rasana*, the organ of taste ; *ghrāṇa*, the organ of smell ; *ākhyam*, called ; *dhīndriya*, *jñānendriya*, (the organs of knowledge) ; *upajāyaté*, are produced.

19. From the sattva particles[1] of these five subtle elements, *ākāśa* etc., are respectively produced[2] what are called the five organs of knowledge (*jñānendriyas*) viz., the organs of sound, touch, sight, taste and smell.

[1] In the eighteenth verse it was implied that this *prakṛti* in which *tamas* was predominant and from which the subtle elements came into being also had the other two *guṇas*, *sattva* and *rajas* in it. From this it naturally follows that the subtle elements produced from it too had in them these three *guṇas.* So from the sattva particles of these elements, it is said, the *jñānendriyas* came into being.

[2] The organs are produced each from one of the subtle elements as follows: from *ākāśa* the organ of sound (hearing), from *vāyu* the organ of touch; from *tejas* the organ of sight; from *ap* the organ of taste and from *pṛthivī* the organ of smell.

[*Note* : These are the specific modifications or effects of the subtle elements; now follows their general modification.]

तैरन्तःकरणं सर्वैर्वृत्तिभेदेन तद्द्विधा । मनो विमर्शरूपं स्याद्बुद्धिस्स्यान्निश्चयात्मिका ॥ २० ॥

Taiḥ, by them; *sarvaiḥ,* by all; *antaḥkaraṇam,* the inner organ; (*upajāyaté,* is produced); *tat,* that; *vṛtti,* modifications; *bhedena,* due to difference in; *dvidhā,* of two kinds; *vimarśarūpam,* of the nature of doubting; *manaḥ,* mind; *syāt,* becomes; *niscayātmikā,* the faculty of decision; *buddhiḥ,* intellect; *syāt,* becomes.

20. By the combination of the *sattva* particles of all these subtle elements is produced the inner organ (*antaḥkaraṇa*). And that *antaḥkaraṇa* according to the difference in its modifications is divided into two: the modification of doubting* called mind and the modification of decision termed *buddhi* (intellect).

* For instance, when the stump of a tree is seen in darkness there is this doubt— is it a man or a stump of a tree. The faculty which brings this doubt is called the manas.

[*Note* : As the *antaḥkaraṇa* is made of the sattva particles of all the five subtle elements it becomes capable of knowing about the good and evil characteristics of all things that are perceived by or come under the purview of the five *jñānendriyas* (organs of knowledge).]

रजोंऽशैः पंचभिस्तेषां क्रमात्कर्मेन्द्रियाणि तु । वाक्पाणिपादपायूपस्थाभिधानानि जज्ञिरे ॥ २१ ॥

Teṣām, of those; *pancabhiḥ,* by the five; *rajomśaiḥ,* by the particles of *rajas*; *kramāt,* respectively; *vāk,* organ of speech; *pāni,* organ of grasping; *pāda,* organ of movement; *pāyu,* the organ of evacuation; *upastha,* organ of generation; *abhidhānāni,* (called by these) names; *karmendriyāṇi,* the organs of action; *tu,* but; *jajñiré,* were created.

21. But from the *rajas* particles of these five elements were respectively created the five organs of action viz. the organs of speech, grasping, movement, generation and evacuation.*

* From the rajas particles of *ākāśa* was created the organ of speech, from the rajas particles of vāyu the organ of grasping and so on in this order. These were the special effects of the individual subtle elements. The next verse states about the common or combined effect of such a combination.

(*Continued on Page* 459)

SCRIPTURES AND THEIR PURPOSE

In an age when literature of every kind has grown enormously and is being read throughout the world, the part books play in the formulation of man's ideas and ideals is not difficult of comprehension. Yet when it comes to the question of religious books there has been a sort of hesitation and an injudicious assessment of their value among the intelligentsia, specially during the last few centuries. Perhaps, hesitation is reasonable, even doubting is permissible but outright condemnation of all that is religious as superstition and sophism is something that is perplexing; it shows an attitude of intolerance and self-righteousness. A position that is not enviable. For are these not the very modes of thinking they impute — we do not know with what measure of justification — to the religious man? But these things apart, it should be obvious to anyone now that religion, in spite of all the forces working against it, has come to stay. And true religion can never be annihilated however much other forces may try. For religion is Truth and Truth can never be destroyed. Religion as Swamiji has often stated is not in mere dogmas or creeds but in God-realization, in the realization of the Spirit. And as Sri Ramakrishna posited from his own experience, God is but one by whatever name He may be called and by whatever way He may be approached.

Relation between Scriptures and Religion

There is a very intimate relationship between the scriptures and religion. For the scriptures are nothing but the records of the intuitive experiences of the sages. They have been verified in the lives of saints and prophets and they are verifiable even today by those who earnestly and intently seek to find Truth. They are as the travel guides in the chartless ocean of spirituality. They are the compass, the sextant, the rudder, the sounding line, the barometer and the charts of an aspirant's ship in the religious sea. That is why some of the religions which had no scriptures, no books, quickly dwindled out of sight. When there is no authentic document people are likely to interpret and twist the utterances according to the individuals' tastes and pass them off as real stuff so that there remains nothing in them of the original, in content. It becomes a mass of superstition, fabulous, with the grain of truth miserably lost in the mudheap as it were. Within a short time everything gets coloured by interests and tendencies of individuals. This happens sometimes even in the case of the written sayings, what then to speak of those which were handed down by word of mouth. Sri Krishna says in the Gita, 'This eternal yoga, O Arjuna, I taught to Vivaswān and Vivaswān taught it to Manu. Manu taught it to Ikshvāku. Thus traditionally handed down it was known among the Rajarshis. But by the passage of time this yoga was lost in this world.'[1] It is to counteract this tendency to corruption and loss that the scriptures are necessary.

A doubt may now be raised whether or not the Vedas, which were presumed to have been handed down by word of mouth from generation to generation, had undergone such mutation. We have several reasons to believe it has not, chief of them being the reverence with which they were held. It made them sacrosanct. Tampering with them was considered blasphemous. Besides, these truths were tested by later saints and sages. If therefore anyone says to the Hindu that what is told in any particular scripture alone is correct and that it is beyond any man's capacity to verify those teachings, the Hindu forthwith gives up that man. For he was taught differently. He was told that given the urge, intensity, time and attention needed for realization, the teachings could be verified and that every one of us could grow into a Rishi and sense those teachings as the Rishis of old did. To become a Rishi is the only way to liberation says Swamiji and he adds, until one becomes a Rishi one has not become religious. So we see that irrespective of the age in which these eternal truths were discovered, they must be open to probation, testing in every other age, nay at all times.

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[1] इमं विवस्वते योगं प्रोक्तवानहमव्ययं ।
विवस्वान्मनवे प्राह मनुरिक्ष्वाकवेऽब्रवीत् ॥

एवं परंपराप्राप्तमिमं राजर्षयो विदुः ।
स कालेनेह महता योगो नष्टः परंतप ॥

Bhagavad Gita IV. 1-2.

The Hindu Scriptures

Now among the scriptures of the Hindus the Vedas occupy a supreme position. They are variously called as Śabda, Śruti etc. That which was first uttered was Śabda (the word or the sound). That which was first heard by sages in the depths of meditation, and in the profundity of their being was Śruti. There is another class of books, which are called Smṛtis — that which was remembered or the traditional law. These latter were composed later to govern society for a particular period. The latter have changed as changes in society occurred. The former contain the eternal truths and these truths never change. That is why the Vedas are said to be without beginning or end. One beauty of the Vedas is that you find in them all the ideas of religion — beginning from God in the far beyond, God as omnipresent and omniscient upto the unity between the creature and the Creator. This has, of course, led to the formulation of several sects, each contending what is to its liking in the Vedas as the important part, and others as secondary. But as Swamiji points out, 'Each is but a different stage in the journey, the aim of which is the perfect conception of the Vedas.' The Rishis of the Vedas were fearless, so they did not do away with the lower ideas as they came into possession of the higher revelations. They preserved these lower truths so that others who were to come after them may not be bewildered at the heights to which they had reached, but come up by stages. Most of the people in the world, at any given time, will be like babies as far as spirituality is concerned. They require to be taken step by step. Hence even at the risk of being accused of confusing the issue, they let these lower truths be. These several statements of the Vedas may appear to the lay man as perplexing but the sages were sure that others like them would be born to show a way out of this maze of ideas. Perhaps in their own times they had no difficulty in dispelling the doubts and confusion that might have arisen in the minds of their contemporaries. Although the scriptures describe a variety of things they chiefly speak of one thing — of God and of the means to attain Him. May be there are some seemingly conflicting ideas about Him. But they are not sustained when put under the microscopic test of profound intuition. This in brief is the content of the scriptures.

How to reconcile the so-called contradictions in the Vedas

The apparent contradictions in the Vedas have to some extent puzzled seekers. This doubting, this feeling at sea, is not a new phenomenon. We meet with this type of doubt in the Upaniṣads too. When Śvetaketu was asked by his father, 'Have you known that One by which everything else is known,' he was genuinely perturbed. He had never heard of such a thing before. He protests and asks to be satisfied. However, the father leads him slowly, by examples and experimentations, to the highest Truth. To know about the Highest even intellectually is a difficult task. For there we find all contradictions meeting. Let us take an instance from the discussion between Yājñavalkya and Maitreyi. Yājñavalkya while explaining how the individual jiva, after shedding its *upadhis*, incrustations, gets merged in Brahman, like the lump of salt thrown into the water and cannot be separated from It, says : 'After attaining oneness, my dear, there is no more consciousness.'[2] This perplexes Maitreyi. She seems to think, 'How can this be? He has first said that Brahman is Pure Intelligence. Now he says after attaining oneness there is no more consciousness. Why does he talk in this conflicting language?' She asks Yājñavalkya, 'Sir, just here you have thrown me into confusion by saying that after attaining oneness the self has no more consciousness.'[3] Yājñavalkya then expounds to her that the self that had attained oneness with Brahman loses the 'particular consciousness' superimposed on the self due to its identifying itself with the body, mind and the like and not the Cosmic Consciousness. And when thus explained only Maitreyi's doubt was cleared.

A similar doubt is being raised by Arjuna in a different context. When Sri Krishna urged Arjuna to fight the battle of Kurukshetra in support of the righteous cause, and simultaneously talked highly of renunciation, the latter got confounded. Arjuna asked: 'By apparently contradictory words, it seems as if you are confusing my understanding. Please tell me that one path by which I can attain the good.'[4] Sri Krishna in reply says that there are two paths and these are for two different types of people. He further adds that one cannot practise renunciation unless one had rid oneself of all desires. So that was not the path for him. Thus, we see that every great teacher had had to speak not only for one class of people but several, and therefore he had to say things which suited those particular types of persons. If these teachings are taken together, without the idea of the context in which they were uttered, it is natural that they appear to be opposing each other in content.

There is a beautiful story in the Upaniṣads which rightly illustrates this point. It shows how the same syllable conveys different meanings to diverse types of people: Once the three classes of sons of Prajapati — the gods, men and Asuras — lived a life of continence with Prajapati. After sometime the gods requested Prajapati to instruct them. Prajapati uttered the syllable "Da" and asked whether they had understood what he meant. They replied they had; that Prajapati was asking them to control themselves. After some time the men too having finished their period of probation begged to be instructed. To them also Prajapati said the word "Da" and asked whether they had understood. They too said, 'Yes, you ask us to give.' Lastly came the Asuras and to them too Prajapati repeated the same syllable "Da" and asked what they understood by it. The Asuras replied, 'You ask us to be kind.' To all of them Prajapati had said that they had rightly understood Him.[5] Does it not sound incoherent? No, a little explanation will prove it. In Sanskrit the words, control, give and be kind begin with the letter "da" viz. *dāmyata, datta,* and *dayadhwam*. Now the devas or the gods were too much given to enjoyment, men to hoarding and the Asuras to killing. By living a life of celibacy with Prajapati all these three had understood their own particular defects and when therefore Prajapati uttered the syllable "da" they knew what he wanted of them. The gods were to abstain from enjoyment, men were to give and the Asuras were enjoined to be kind and all this was conveyed by the utterance of that single syllable "da". Does this not show that the scriptures serve the purpose of all genuine seekers?

Similarly in the Vedas, which are meant for all, we find apparently contradictory ideas but suiting men of different tendencies. These contrary views are actually only visions of the same Reality from different angles, from varied heights. So, an earnest seeker has only to find out which path and which ideal appeal to his nature, suit his temperament most. But he has to see unity in the diversity. For diversity makes for creation and unity goes back to the source, makes for our own abode. Scriptures, therefore, do not confuse us but tell us everything and we get bewildered because we have not the acumen to grasp their import.

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[2] न प्रेत्य संज्ञास्ति। *Br. Up.* II. iv. 12.

[3] अत्रैव मा भगवानमूमुहन्न प्रेत्य संज्ञास्तीति ॥ *op. cit.* 13.

[4] व्यामिश्रेणेव वाक्येन बुद्धिं मोहयसीव मे।
तदेकं वद निश्चित्य येन श्रेयोऽहमाप्नुयाम् ॥
Bhagavad Gita III. 2.

[5] *Brahadaranyaka Upanishad,* V. ii. 1-3.

Purpose of the Scriptures

Having dealt with the content of the scriptures, it is not difficult to presume what their intention is. It has already been explained that they do not intend to confuse man. This should be always remembered. Secondly, their intention is to guide mankind on the path of spirituality, to help man upward from whatever level of development he is. Like the scientist who does research with the data already in his possession, the aspirant with the help of the scriptures engages in research in the spiritual field. One can verify one's experience — the results of one's research in the laboratory of the spirit — with the conclusions already arrived at in the scriptures. They are like reference books, where we can compare notes. If one's experiences are not in compliance with the eternal truths one has missed one's way somewhere. But this does not happen when one is under the guidance of a competent teacher.

However, there is every chance of the principles of the scriptures being misinterpreted and misused if they fall into wrong hands. We shall cite an instance here to show how the theory of Karma was tortuously treated by glib talkers: When Swamiji was staying at Calcutta in 1897, a preacher belonging to a society for the protection of cows had an interview with him. When asked about the object of the society, the preacher said that it was to protect the old, decrepit and diseased cows from the slaughter house and provide infirmaries for them. Swamiji while commending their work asked the preacher what help his society — which had enough resources — had rendered to the people in central India, where due to famine nine lakhs of people had died. The preacher's nonchalant reply was that the famine had broken out as a result of men's Karma, their sins. Can perversion of the principles go any further? Swamiji who was furious with indignation at such indifference of the preacher towards humanity, suppressing his feelings said that he had not the least sympathy with associations which did not feel for men even while they were dying of starvation. Let us beware of such misguided people who make a travesty of truth.

Extent of the usefulness of the Scriptures

As already stated the scriptures can help you, guide you but they cannot take you to the goal. Records of other peoples' realization cannot make you realize. You can tread their path, feel their way but you have to struggle for yourself to reach the goal. All effort is yours. The books cannot ferry you across the ocean of life. No one can do that. Even the teacher can only guide you. Śri Śankara referring to mere scriptural knowledge, in an exquisite couplet in Sanskrit, says: 'If the highest Truth is not known all study of the scriptures is in vain. When, however, the highest Truth is known then also the study of scriptures is futile.'[6] Does he then discourage Shastric studies? No one can make this allegation against Śankara. For we meet in his commentaries on the Upaniṣads very often, the statement, 'Atman is to be pursued vigorously through the teachings of the Shastras and the Guru.'[7] What he purports to convey to us is that if the knowledge of the scriptures is not utilized, not put into practice, then that knowledge is acquired in vain. Again, once the Highest is realized all further study of scriptures is useless, for all of them are only as a means to attain the Highest, and not for their own sake. Once the purpose — the attainment of God — is fulfilled there remains nothing more to be gained.

Sri Ramakrishna deprecating too much of studies said, 'Suppose you have received a

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[6] अविज्ञाते परे तत्त्वे शास्त्राधीतिस्तु निष्फला ।
विज्ञातेऽपि परे तत्त्वे शास्त्राधीतिस्तु निष्फला ॥
Vivekachudamani, 59.

[7] शास्त्राचार्योपदेशैर्ज्ञातव्यः ।

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letter from your home asking you to buy certain things. And suppose you have mislaid it. If the contents of the letter are known to you, will you worry about the letter or try to collect the things stated therein?' Another time he exhorted one of his young disciples: 'What is there in the Vedanta that you study it so much. Is it not that "Brahman alone is real and all else illusory"? Work for its realization.'

Swamiji remarks in one place, 'Books cannot teach God, but they can destroy ignorance; their action is negative.' Even the Vedas cannot show you God, cannot make you realize your true self. 'By what can you know the knower,'[8] say the Upaniṣads. Your essential being is the self-luminous consciousness. What is required is to dispel the ignorance that has cloaked it. Remove the covering and you see the light. If we are in a dark room we will have only to throw open the doors and windows to see the sun. We do not require another light to see the sun. He is self-luminous. When he rises we see him. Not only can we see him but we can also dispense with all other lights which we might have lighted to see other objects inside or outside our dwellings. And this Atman, or Brahman, which is the essence of every creature, nay everything that is in the universe, is the source of all light, even of the sun, moon, stars and all, say the Upaniṣads.[9]

Conclusion

Too much study of scriptures makes man vain-glorious. It leads him away from the goal. The goal of life is God-realization. All scriptures tell us that God alone is real and all other things are transient. They also show us the way to God. What we have to do after knowing the purpose of the scriptures is to work for its realization. Or as Sri Ramakrishna says, what is required is to dive deep down into ourselves and make our life fruitful by realization of our true nature, like the mythical pearl-oyster which after collecting the rain drop, when the star Svāti is in the ascendant, dives down to the bottom of the sea to produce the beautiful pearl.

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[8] विज्ञातारमरे केन विजानीयात् ॥ *Br. Up.* II. iv. 14.

[9] *Katha Up.* V. 15.

PANCADAŚĪ

(*Continued from Page* 454)

तैः सर्वैः सहितैः प्राणो वृत्तिभेधात्स पंचधा । प्राणोऽपानः समानश्चोदानव्यानौ च ते पुनः ॥ २२ ॥

Taissarvaiḥ, by all those; *sahitaiḥ*, by combination; *prānaḥ*, the chief *prāṇa*, (*upajāyaté*, is formed). *Saḥ*, that; *vṛttibhedāt*, due to difference in modification; *pancadhā*, (is) of five types; *te punaḥ*, they again (are); *prāṇaḥ, apānah, samānaḥ, ca, udānavyānau, ca*,—*prāṇa, apāna*, and *samāna, udāna* and *vyāna*.

22. By the combination of the *rajas* particles of all of these five elements the chief *prāṇa* is produced. And this *prāṇa* according to its functions* is severally named as *prāṇa, apāna, samāna, udāna* and *vyāna*.

* The five functions and stations of the *prāṇa* are as follows: (1) By remaining in the heart and moving in and out of the body through the nostrils the *prāṇa* keeps the body in the living condition. (2) By remaining at the organ of evacuation the *apāna* maintains the functions of evacuation. (3) Stationed at the navel the *samāna* distributes the digested food to all parts of the body. (4) Having its abode at the throat, *udāna* makes the voice function and in the end (at the time of death) departs dragging all the other *prāṇas* with it. (5) Diffused throughout the body the *vyāna* maintains the body temperature and digests the food that is taken.

HOLY MOTHER AND HER DISCIPLES

SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

I

Holy Mother is really an amazing personality. She was born and brought up in a simple village, about seventy-five miles from Calcutta, a village which was completely untouched by modern culture. Of the sixty-seven years of her mortal existence she spent forty-seven in the company of her relatives and the villagers. For the last twenty years of her life she was known not too intimately to a few hundred disciples and devotees. She was married but no nun ever lived a purer life. She was engaged in the performance of daily household duties and yet she never missed her meditation and prayer. In later years of her life she was literally worshipped by her disciples as a Goddess, as the divine Mother of the universe, yet she was utterly humble and simple. She was blessed by highest spiritual experiences, the same kind of spiritual experiences Sri Ramakrishna had, yet a stranger could not distinguish her from an average Hindu woman. During her lifetime the public did not even see her photograph. Yet when the Centenary of her birth was celebrated in 1954, the whole of India paid homage to her saintliness. Public meetings were held all over the country and abroad in her honour and were participated in by members of the Cabinet and Parliament, by Governors of state, political leaders and scholars of distinction. There exist in India convents, monasteries, schools and hospitals which are associated with her name and which draw inspiration from her life and teachings. Today, both in India and in other countries wherever Sri Ramakrishna is respected, Holy Mother also gets an equal share of veneration.

First of all I will narrate her life. Her father was an orthodox Hindu, magnanimous and devoted to his religion. Her mother was God-fearing, utterly simple and natural, and busy day and night with her household duties. The family was poor but it was a contented family. The Holy Mother once said : 'If my parents were not so spiritual how could I be born in that family ? ' Her name was Sarada. During her childhood, which was spent in her village, she was a peace-maker among her playmates and companions. She was guileless and indrawn. She helped her mother in the discharge of the household chores and in the kitchen. Even as a child she helped in the fields. She helped pick the cotton. She would carry food to the labourers in the field. She used to cut grass for the cattle.

At the age of five she was married to Sri Ramakrishna. At that time Sri Ramakrishna was passing through what is called a God-intoxicated state at Dakshineswar, near Calcutta. He was completely oblivious of the outside world. But people regarded his God-intoxicated state as simple insanity. He gave up his sleep and all normal behaviour of life. So when this news reached his village his mother became anxious about him and thought a suitable marriage would perhaps bring his mind down to the normal level of consciousness. So friends and relatives were sent to different villages to seek out a suitable bride. Sri Ramakrishna himself told his mother where such a bride was to be found. It was reported a few years before that when the Holy Mother was only two years old, she visited a neighbouring village and attended a religious festival where Sri Ramakrishna was present. As it often happens relatives tease little children with questions and this time one of her relatives asked her whom among the men there present she would like to marry. She raised her tiny finger and pointed to Sri Ramakrishna. Holy Mother was five years old when they were married, but it was a strange marriage.

Sri Ramakrishna regarded all women as his own mother and also as a manifestation of the divine Mother of the universe. In Sarada sex-consciousness was never awakened. So no earthly purpose whatsoever was served by this marriage. But the marriage played a most important part in the fulfilment of Sri Ramakrishna's spiritual mission. After his death Holy Mother carried on the Master's unfinished task.

Though she was married at five, her real contact with the Master came at Kamarpukur when she was thirteen or fourteen years old. Sri Ramakrishna at once won her heart by his love, a love untainted by worldliness. He took upon himself the responsibility, though he himself was a monk, of training his young wife in the discharge of her worldly duties and also in her spiritual practices. She learned from him how to serve guests, how to act toward strangers, how to respect the elders and show courtesy to the young. Sri Ramakrishna deepened her love for God and also her non-attachment to the world. One of the teachings of Sri Ramakrishna to her was to always act according to time, place and circumstance, and she applied it till the end of her life to disciples, strangers, and to Sri Ramakrishna himself. This was one of his greatest teachings to her. Sri Ramakrishna instilled in her a passion for purity. When but a little child, she would look at a tuberose and pray to God: 'Please make my character as white and as fragrant as that rose.' Later on looking at the moon, she prayed, 'O, Lord, there is a stain even on the moon but make my character completely stainless.'

When Holy Mother was nineteen, she visited Sri Ramakrishna at Dakshineswar and thenceforth lived with him till his death. One of his very first questions to her was, 'Have you come here to drag me down to the world?' Instantly the young wife replied, 'I have come to attend on you and to learn about God.' On another occasion Holy Mother said to Sri Ramakrishna, 'I am with you to help you realize your spiritual ideal.' One day Holy Mother said to Sri Ramakrishna, 'How do you regard me?' and he answered, 'I regard you in the same way as I regard my own mother who gave birth to this body, and also as the divine Mother of the universe whom I worship in the temple as Kali.'

So Holy Mother lived with him at Dakshineswar as his nurse, companion, disciple, a devoted wife, but always a nun. Through her Sri Ramakrishna tested the integrity of his spirituality. For six months they lived in the same room and shared the same bed but neither of them even for a moment thought of the physical body or had any physical desire. Sri Ramakrishna said later on, 'If she had not been so pure, if she had forgotten herself and made physical demands on me, would not I too have lost my self-control? Who knows?' Romain Rolland said about her that with her permission and with her blessings Sri Ramakrishna was able to lead the life of an ideal monk.

When Holy Mother was eighteen years old Sri Ramakrishna wanted to awaken her latent divinity and formally worshipped her with all the rituals as the divine Mother of the universe. She seemed to have sensed at that moment a new power and a new responsibility. They lived together for sixteen years until the Master's death. Her daily life alternated between the household work and meditation. Her mind was pervaded by serenity and calmness. She woke up regularly at three o'clock in the morning and retired at eleven o'clock at night. She swept the rooms, cooked the meals for the Master, looked after the guests who were mostly the Master's devotees. Sometimes she cooked for as many as sixteen or seventeen without outside help. Yet she found time to repeat the Lord's name one hundred thousand times a day. I suppose she made it a habit to repeat the Lord's name even while doing her household duties. She led a very rigorous life but this was compensated for by the joy she derived from serving her divine husband.

Sri Ramakrishna always knew of Sarada's future mission. He knew she was an awakener of souls, so he began to train her accordingly. She had many spiritual experiences. When Sri Ramakrishna talked to her about her future mission she was distressed at the idea of becoming a teacher. Sri Ramakrishna then said :'Won't you do anything? Must I do everything?' Holy Mother answered, 'I am a mere woman, what can I do?' Sri Ramakrishna then said: 'No, no, you will do many things. Look at the people of Calcutta, squirming like worms in darkness. You must show them light. How little I have accomplished. You have a much heavier task.' Perhaps he also meant the other big cities of the world. Sri Ramakrishna wanted to manifest through the Holy Mother the Motherhood of God and the Divinity of woman. In the Christian or Jewish tradition God is worshipped as Father or Jehovah. The Hindus accept the relationships of Father or Master but the unique feature of Hinduism is the worship of God as Mother. Though men and women are all sparks of God, according to Hindu tradition, woman resembles God in His creative aspect. A woman, like God, projects children from her womb and nourishes them. So also the divine Mother does. For this reason, I believe, Sri Ramakrishna wanted to manifest the Motherhood of God through the Holy Mother and also to manifest through her the Divinity of woman, the Divine spark inherent in every woman. So the Holy Mother was trained to regard all men as her children, to show compassion, forgiveness and patience. These are the great characteristics of motherhood.

Once Holy Mother expressed the natural desire for children of her own. The Master said: 'I am leaving for you so many children, all pure as gold. Ordinary mothers do not get such children through practice of austerities of millions of births.' Holy Mother's own mother once complained: 'I have married my daughter to an insane man who is not interested in the world and so she will never know the joy of being addressed as "Mother".' Sri Ramakrishna heard this and said to her, 'Your daughter will have so many children, she will be addressed as mother by so many people, that her ears will literally burn.' We know how the Master's prophecy has been fulfilled.

Sri Ramakrishna became ill and the Holy Mother nursed him. He passed away in 1886. The Holy Mother's heart became filled with great anguish. She did not want to live but several visions of the Master indicated to her her future role. I shall mention one special vision which happened after his death. Holy Mother was seated on the bank of the Ganges. There was a full moon. Suddenly she saw Sri Ramakrishna coming from behind and walking down into the Ganges. At once the Master melted into the water of the Ganges. Swami Vivekananda appeared and took that water in his hands and began to sprinkle it over numerous people who were present there and at the touch of that water they attained liberation. Holy Mother understood from this vision the purpose of the Master's embodiment, that his incarnation was to bring spiritual enlightenment to the people for their liberation. She realized the work was about to begin and she had to play a significant part in it.

The headquarters of the Ramakrishna Mission called Belur Math was dedicated in 1898 and the Mother's spiritual ministry began at that time and continued until her death. But the fullest manifestation of this phase of her life was seen from 1910.

Holy Mother was a real awakener of souls — an illumined Guru. According to Hindu tradition God is the real Guru but He uses a human channel. If you get any wisdom or illumination from your teacher remember it comes from God Himself. The teacher is only a channel. The purer the channel the greater is the manifestation of God's power and grace. Holy Mother was purity itself. At one time she remarked: 'I do not remember having committed any sin since my very birth. I touched the Master at the age of five. I might not have understood him at that time, but he undoubtedly touched me.' She was entirely free from any worldly motive and she taught out of infinite compassion. We know she transmitted spirituality literally as one hands down a physical object. She often said, 'I have done everything at the time of initiation.' Afterwards she taught by words, personal example and silent influence. She assumed the entire responsibility of her disciples and suffered for them accordingly. She stood by her disciples here and hereafter. Death did not sever the relationship between her and her disciples. She assured her disciples that she would guide them even after her death until they attained liberation. All sorts of people came to her: men, women, young and old, students, lawyers, high government officials, college professors, though she herself was illiterate, people entangled in the world, highly evolved souls seeking realization and also eccentric people. Practically none went away empty-handed. A silent prayer constantly welled up from her heart: 'Come all of you, I am here for your sake. I shall soothe my heart by showing you the way to liberation. Suppose you have committed sins, will you be deprived of my blessings on that account?' This silent attraction brought people to her. There was no advertisement, no book was written about her at that time, no picture of her was available to the public. Sri Ramakrishna's direct disciples who respected her as they respected the Master himself, seldom spoke to the public about her for fear they would not understand and make light of her. So it was an irresistible attraction like that of the magnet to the needle or like that of the flowers to the bees that drew people to her. Monks and householders became her disciples and many of the householders later on became monks.

II

What was her relationship with her disciples? She acted towards them as mother, as teacher, as Divinity itself. These three aspects were not compartmentalized. Some disciples were impressed by her motherly love, some by her patience, and kindness as a teacher, and some by her grace as Divinity assuring them of the vision of God. But to one and all she was the mother.

As mother her compassion and love knew no bounds. Here I shall quote a few lines from a letter written by Swami Vivekananda's Western disciple, Sister Nivedita. 'You are full of love. And it is not a flushed and violent love like ours, and like the world's, but a gentle peace that brings good to everyone and wishes ill to none. It is a golden radiance, full of play.' So as a mother she looked after the disciples' physical and spiritual welfare. Many of the disciples visited her at the village where she lived from time to time. She cooked for them, nursed them when they were sick, cleaned their plates, washed their linen, procured special vegetables and fish for them from the villagers. Some of her disciples who visited her from Calcutta were in the habit of taking tea with milk the first thing in the morning. For them the Holy Mother would go out in the morning, pot in hand, before any were about, and ask the neighbours for milk for their tea. When some protested she said: 'I am the mother. Who will look after the children if not the mother?' She treated all disciples alike making no distinction of caste or social position. She said she made no distinction between a highway robber, a Muslim who became devoted to her and who had been in jail several times, and her monastic disciples. To her they all belonged to the Master's family.

Disciples often made reasonable and unreasonable demands upon her. Some wanted to have immediate vision of God and some wanted her to reveal herself to them as the divine Mother of the universe. With motherly solicitude and patience she pacified their restless minds. A devotee out of pique once did not visit her for two or three years, though he lived very near her house, because he did not make spiritual progress. When the Mother sent for him and he complained he did not feel her grace and that he was not making spiritual progress, she said: 'The sun dwells high in the sky and the water lies low on the earth. The water does not shout to the sun asking to be taken up. It is the very nature of the sun to take up the water in the form of vapour. You need not practise any discipline. I am doing everything for you.' Then she said, 'Suppose you are asleep on a cot and some one moves you bed and all to another place. In that case will you know, immediately upon waking, that you have come to a different place? Not at all.' There were also eccentric disciples. One, while taking the dust of her feet, which is a Hindu tradition, bit her toe. Holy Mother was physically hurt. When she said, 'What is that?' he told her he had hurt her purposely so that she would remember him at least so long as the pain in the toe lasted. Holy Mother said, 'This is a strange devotion.' She loved the disciples not merely as an earthly mother. She regarded them both as children and as God.

She also played the role of a teacher. As teacher she resolved the doubts of her disciples and taught them the process of meditation and japam. Generally she pointed out Sri Ramakrishna as their chosen Ideal. But she was not dogmatic. If they wanted to worship other aspects of the Godhead she encouraged them in that. However she emphasized Sri Ramakrishna as the greatest manifestation of all times, because she saw with her own eyes his wonderful renunciation, his constant absorption in samadhi, and his acceptance of other religions. Sri Ramakrishna himself had said, 'Those who have sincerely prayed to God even once must come to me.' So Sri Ramakrishna was to her the embodiment of Brahman. When you excavate an old site you sometimes find gold coins. They are museum pieces. To the archaeologist they are very valuable but they cannot be used to purchase daily needs. For that the currency of the times must be used. Sri Ramakrishna was such currency, different from the valuable gold coins of past ages. Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother told her disciples, would quicken their spiritual realization.

Holy Mother could hardly read the simple books of the Bengali language, yet among her disciples you find educated people of all India whose language she did not understand. There were Parsis, Westerners, and South Indians, who could not understand her language. But somehow or other she communicated her instructions to them. While initiating her disciples she would meditate for a few minutes. It took her only a few minutes to know the spiritual potentiality of the disciple. In a few cases she declined to give initiation as she thought it would be too great a drain on her spiritual strength. She remarked at one time that when God became embodied his spirit became limited by that body. Then she said sorrowfully, 'If this body, instead of being such a small frame of bones and flesh were a big one, how many more people I could help!' Again she said: 'This body will certainly perish one day. Let it go now if it must. But let me give initiation.'

Every day even during her serious illness she regularly prayed for the disciples' welfare. Someone asked her not to forego her sleep. She answered: 'What can I do? They do not meditate. I must do it for them. Even after death I shall look after their welfare.' No repentant disciple was deprived of her grace. She made the most astounding remark at one time. She said, 'I am the mother of the virtuous, I am the mother of the wicked.' To a disciple she said: 'Why are you afraid of past wicked deeds? Always remember there is the Master, and I too as your mother am here.' One of Sri Ramakrishna's direct disciples said about her, 'The poison we could not swallow the Holy Mother has not only taken but also digested.'

One of Holy Mother's woman companions, a direct disciple of Sri Ramakrishna once said to her, 'Look here, we saw how Sri Ramakrishna transmitted power to his disciples and how great those disciples became. We do not see any of your disciples so enlightened.' The Holy Mother answered: 'When he made his disciples he used the utmost discrimination in selecting them. He tested them again and again before he accepted them and he made only a handful of disciples. But toward me he pushed whole rows of ants.'

III

I shall now say a few words about her Divinity. Sri Ramakrishna practised many spiritual austerities for the vision of God. Holy Mother did not outwardly practise any of these austerities and yet she had the same spiritual experiences. Sri Ramakrishna's disciples believed that the same Divinity worked through the body of the Master and functioned through the body and mind of the Mother. She was an incarnation of the Divine Śakti. This power is inseparable from Brahman, or the Supreme Spirit, as the fire is inseparable from its power to burn or as the word is inseparable from its meaning.

She asked some disciples not to make any distinction between her and the Master. Now and then she would remind the disciples of her Divine nature. To one she said, 'Call on me when you are in distress.' On another occasion a disciple asked, 'If Sri Ramakrishna is Bhagavan or God, who are you ?' She said : 'I am the Divine Mother.' Then the disciple asked : 'Do you always remember your true nature ?' 'How can I ?' she answered, 'Otherwise who will do all this work ? Sometimes I do, then I say to myself, "what am I doing here ?" Then comes the veil of *māyā* and I forget. I myself am *māyā*. No one will understand me as long as I am alive. They will only know after my death.'

Sri Ramakrishna said about her that she was like a cat covered with ash. It is only after the ash is wiped off you see the nature of the cat. One day a disciple asked her : 'Why do you give initiation and suffer so much on that account ?' When some devotees touched her feet she felt intense pain and had to pour Ganges water over her body to soothe her nerves and get relief from the physical pain. So when the disciple asked her why she herself gave initiation she made a very significant remark. She said : 'How much suffering a worldly creature goes through ! Moved by this suffering God comes down to earth. Who but God will relieve the creature of his suffering ? God is a sympathetic soul. He suffers more than his creatures. God alone has become everything — the blind, the deaf, the crippled. It is not the creature but God who suffers. He understands how much a creature suffers. Again I say, it is not really the creature who suffers, but it is God who dwells in the creature who suffers. Therefore whoever comes to me weeping I must relieve his suffering. I must give him liberation. They ask me why I do not sleep. Where is sleep ? How can I sleep ? It seems to me that the time I sleep away should be devoted to the welfare of others.'

It is the Divinity of the Holy Mother which gives assurance of their spiritual future to her disciples and devotees. She was the manifestation of Divinity and yet outwardly she was very humble. When a disciple addressed her as Divine Mother, she said : 'As you have all come to the Master, so have I. As he has been showering grace upon you all, so he gave me shelter at his feet. I am his handmaiden, and I feel blessed to be his handmaiden.'

Though the Master's spiritual companion, and helpmate in the fulfilment of his mission, yet she never claimed she was superior in any way to anyone.

There is a temple now on the site of her birth. It is a white temple and from its highest pinnacle a banner flutters inscribed with the simple word 'MA'. Her disciples and devotees coming from far and near see this banner ; and the word 'MA' recalls to them her words : 'I am the mother of the virtuous. I am the mother of the wicked. Whenever you are in distress, call on me.'

THE PHILOSOPHY OF THE BHAGAVADGITA

VISHWANATH PRASAD VARMA

Introduction

The Bhagavadgītā enjoys a position of pre-eminent significance in Indian thought. Throughout the ancient and medieval periods of Indian history there appeared a great number of teachers, mystics and sages who wrote upon the significance of the message of this scripture. In the late medieval period also there appeared great commentators upon this book. Śaṁkara with his stern monism, Rāmānuja with his modified monism,[1] and Madhva with his dualism, interpreted the Gītā according to their own metaphysical presuppositions. There were other interpreters also like Nimbārka, Vallabha, Madhusūdana and Jñāneshwara.

With the introduction of Sanskrit learning in the West, the message of the Vedānta and the Gītā attracted other philosophers and savants of different countries. I cannot resist the temptation of noting what Schopenhauer said about the Vedānta (the Upaniṣads). He considers the Upaniṣads to be the most elevating and the most beneficial study in the world and acknowledged them to be the solace of his life and the solace of his death. The German romantist Schlegel was also influenced by the Gītā. Emerson and Thoreau were also its great admirers.[2] The admiration that the Gītā elicits in foreign lands is a testification to the universality of its message. It is true that the Gītā is the epitome of the teachings of Hinduism,[3] nevertheless, it has a comprehensive and universalistic character and that accounts for its power and vitality.[4]

In our own times great teachers, leaders and prophets have derived tremendous relief from the Gītā.[5] Lokamanya Bal Gangadhara Tilak wrote his monumental book on the Gītā while he was a prisoner in Mandalay. Mahatma Gandhi, on the basis of his own personal experiences obtained in the course of devoutly following its teachings for nearly half a century,[6] has given an interpretation of this book which emphasizes *anāsakti* (non-attachment). Sri Aurobindo interprets the Gītā as a document of the spiritual synthesis of action, knowledge and devotion. The final secret and the deepest esoteric import of the Gītā, according to Sri Aurobindo, is the Godward surrender of our entire personality and being. Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai also derived great consolation from the Gītā. Chafekar, the hero of the Poona Murder of 1897, had a copy of the Gītā in his hands when he went to the gallows. Even Netaji Subhas Bose in the daring and terrible days of the Indian National Army's fight against the imperialistic powers had a copy of the Gītā to provide strength to him.

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[1] According to Richard Garbe there are 4 stages in the evolution of Bhagavatism or Pancharatra. (i) upto 300 B.C.; (ii) about 300 B.C., (iii) upto 1200 A.D. and (iv) the transformations brought about by Ramanuja. Garbe regards Vasudeva Krishna as the promulgator of a popular monotheism outside the general domain of orthodox ritualistic Brahmanism. Ramanuja must be credited with having provided a metaphysics of the highest order to the Pancharatra religion.

[2] Thoreau was aware of the French translation of the Gita (possibly by Burnouf) and of its English translation by Charles Wilkins (published in London in 1875 and in New York in 1867). His work *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers* is eloquently appreciative of this Hindu scripture. Thoreau read extracts from this work of his to Emerson in 1846. See Romain Rolland, *The Life of Vivekananda* (Almora, Advaita Ashrama, 4th impression, 1953), pp. 47-51.

[3] The great merit of the Gita is its synthetic orientation. It attempts to bring at one place the metaphysics of the Vedanta, the cosmology of the Samkhya, the ethics of Karma yoga, the devotional teachings of Bhagavatism and the Yogic technics for mental and physical culture. Hence it has had an abiding and universal appeal for the Hindu heart.

[4] Richard Garbe, *Die Bhagavad-Gita* (Leipzig, 1905 and 1921). Rudolf Otto, *The Original Gita* (London, 1932) Otto Schrader, *The Kashmir Recension of the Bhagavadgita.*

[5] It cannot be denied that one of the greatest sources of the appeal of the Bhagavadgita is its powerful and melodious language full of grace and vitality (सप्राण भाषा).

[6] M. Gandhi would have stoutly defended the superiority of the metaphysically-rooted ethics of the Bhagavadgita to the modern notions of ethical relativism as propounded on the basis of sociology and anthropology.

The origin of life

The problem of the origin of life is discussed at two levels in ancient Hindu thought. There are two levels — the vital psychic, and the transcendent — at which the Hindu thinkers have been discussing the problems of human life and existence. At the vital-psychic level the *prāṇa* and the *manas* are regarded as the constituents of our *linga* or *sukṣma śarīra* or what is sometimes called the astral body. The gross or surface physical body is transitory. It perishes at death and hence it has been said: भस्मांतं शरीरम्, consignment to the flames is the final destiny of this physical tenement. But the vital-psychic (प्राणमय and मनोमय) body is comparatively more enduring. In a sense it can be regarded as the essence of one's personality. It continues to be till the soul or the *Ātman* attains absolute perfection and enlightenment. The being of the vital and psychic element is reduced to extinction only by the attainment of *mokṣa* or final salvation and liberation. Hence the vital-psychic element is not the ultimate essence. According to the Hindu theorists the real and the ultimate essence or being of a man is the *Ātman*, the eternal, immortal, super-physical Real. The *Ātman* represents the transcendent level at which the problem of human life can be discussed. The Bhagavadgītā also acknowledges these two levels of enquiry for the discussion of the destiny of the human being.

According to the Bhagavadgītā the *jīva* is an eternal portion of God. Sri Krishna says: ममैवांशो जीवलोके जीवभूत: सनातन: But '*amsha*' does not imply any physical portion. It is only a metaphorical way of saying that the human self is, in its inmost essence, the supreme spiritual Self.

The Gītā is completely emphatic on the absolute distinction of the material and the transcendent bases of existence.[7] The physical is only a means and an instrument. It is the habitation for the self. Krishna[8] asks Arjuna to engage in what appears as a ghastly and dastardly action — the killing of one's own kith and kin. But even this gigantic barbarous act of killing is encouraged for the sake of Dharma because, after all, the destruction of the physical bodies does not amount to the neutralization of the total being of people.

The three levels of Karma yoga

I regard Karma yoga based on *jñāna* and *bhakti* to be the secret of the Gītā. At the elementary level, Karma yoga means the performance of our social, civic and personal duties in a spirit of detachment. We have to be faithful to our duties and should not cling to the thought of the results.[9] God is the dispenser of consequences and he is bound to deliver the true rewards of our actions.[10] But this is only the elementary import of Karma yoga and this is the meaning that has been emphasized in Mahatma Gandhi's *Anāsakti-yoga*. At a higher level, we have to perform not only our duties dispassionately but have to cultivate knowledge. According to the Gītā the discrimination between *Kṣetrajña* and *Kṣetra* (or Puruṣa and Prakṛti) is essential. But the climax of philosophic knowledge which the Gītā advocates, is the attainment of the Purushottama — the subject-objectless impersonal being who sometimes is regarded even higher than the predicateless absolute (*akshara*) of the monistic school of Vedanta. In this higher stage of knowledge, Karma yoga receives a more intimate meaning. It implies not merely actionism but a philosophic cultivation of the highest truths.[11] This amounts to a synthesis of action and cognition. This state of realization is higher than the formulas of social idealism, utilitarianism and humanistic positivism and deontological intuitionism which have been made key concepts in Western ethics.[12] This *jñānamūlaka Karma yoga* or a superior synthesis of Vedantic metaphysics and disinterested actionism has been regarded as the great message of the Gītā.[13]

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[7] It can be said that there are three types of discussions in the Bhagavadgita. (i) *Metaphysical*—e.g. the synthesis of the teachings of the Samkhya and the Vedanta. (ii) *Theological*—e.g. the discussions of Avatarahood, Visvarupadarshana and Vibhuti. The conception of Kala (Time-Spirit or *Zeit-Geist*) is also partly theological. (iii) Sociological—the elaboration of the ideals and functions of the *chaturvarnya*.

[8] The historicity of Krishna has been the topic for endless controversies among Indologists. The *Rigveda* viii, 85-87 refers to Krishna as a *rishi*. The Vedas also use the word Krishna in an adjectival manner. (कृष्णं नियानं हरय: सुपर्णा:) The *Chandogya Upanishad* states that Ghora Angirasa taught Krishna Devakiputra. Some Indologists have regarded Krishna as a non-Aryan hero because of his dark complexion and because of his fight against Indra. R. G. Bhandarkar regarded Krishna as a boy-god of the Abhiras. Modern Indian leaders have also differed about their interpretation of the personality of Krishna. Dayananda regarded him as a great man; Tilak and Aurobindo regard him as an incarnation of God, while Gandhi without repudiating the historicity of Krishna says that in the Gita he has been represented as a symbolical figure for divine power. In his *Gita ki Bhumika*, Sri Aurobindo regarded Krishna as a promoter of pan-Indian unity under the leadership of the Pandavas.

[9] न मां कर्माणि लिम्पन्ति न मे कर्मफले स्पृहा ।
इति मां योऽभिजानाति कर्मभिर्न स बध्यते ॥

But there is the highest stage of Karma yoga. That highest realization means the intuitive and profound synthesis of cognition, emotion and action. Even when knowledge and virtuous action have been synthesized the emotional aspect of man still remains unelevated. The chastening of emotions is attained by the adoration of God.[14] The austereness and passionlessness and a sense of philosophic reticence which may characterize the person who obtains the realization of Karma yoga at the second

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एवं ज्ञात्वा कृतं कर्म पूर्वैरपि मुमुक्षुभिः ।
कुरु कर्मैव तस्मात्त्वं पूर्वैः पूर्वतरं कृतम् ॥
(*B.G.* IV. 14-15)

[10] पार्थ नैवेह नामुत्र विनाशस्तस्य विद्यते ।
न हि कल्याणकृत्कश्चिद् दुर्गतिं तात गच्छति ॥
(*B.G.* V. 40)

अनन्याश्चिन्तयन्तो मां ये जनाः पर्युपासते ।
तेषां नित्याभियुक्तानां योगक्षेमं वहाम्यहम् ॥
(*B.G.* IX. 22)

[11] Thus it is clear that there is an essential difference between the Mimamsa doctrine of Karman and the Gita doctrine of Karma yoga. The Mimamsa emphasizes only Karmakanda of a ritualistic nature. But the range of Karman according to the Gita is far wider. Furthermore, true Karma yoga has to be rooted in knowledge.

[12] Sometimes the concept of *Svadharma* is compared with the notions of social ethics (or Hegel's *Sittlichkeit*) of F. H. Bradley and T. H. Green and also with the triple social differentiation advocated in Plato's *Republic.* The theory of Karmayoga based on *Anasakti* is compared with the Kantian categorical Imperative. In his *Foundations of the Metaphysic of Morals*, by E. T. Beck, University of Chicago ed., pp. 72-73, Kant says: 'The conception of an objective principle, so far as it constrains a will, is a command (of reason), and the formula of this command is called an imperative. Therefore imperatives are only formulas expressing the relation of objective laws of volition in general to the subjective imperfection of the will of this or that rational being, e.g., the human will... The categorical imperative would be one which presented an action as of itself objectively necessary, without regard to any other end.' He further says, *ibid.*, pp. 75-76 'There is one imperative which directly commands a certain conduct, without making its condition some purpose to be reached by it. This imperative is categorical. It concerns not the material of the action and its intended result but the form and the principle from which it results. What is essentially good in it consists in the interaction, the result being what it may. This imperative may be called the imperative of morality.' For the difference, however, between the theories of the Gita and Kant, see V. P. Varma, *Studies in Hindu Political Thought and its Metaphysical Foundation,* Motilal Banarsidas, Varanasi 2nd ed. of 1959, pp. 157-58.

[13] The Gita teaches the cultivation of *daivi sampat* which implies the repudiation of egoism as a necessary consequence of the realization of the teachings of the Vedanta and the Samkhya. Furthermore, the emphasis on the performance of *Yajna* categorically implies a tremendous concern for the good of the community.

[14] There are three elements in Western humanism —(i) the replacement of the theocentric by the anthropocentric view, (ii) the notion of human freedom and (iii) the emphasis on reason in place of superstition. But while secularistic considerations are uppermost in Western humanism, the Gita pleads for a 'divine humanism'. It inculcates the cultivation of '*samya*'—a spirit of absolute equality towards all living beings on the basis of the realization of the habitation of the supreme Spirit in the hearts of all sentient creatures :

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।
(*B.G.* XVIII. 61.)

इहैव तैर्जितः सर्गो येषां साम्ये स्थितं मनः ।
निर्दोषं हि समं ब्रह्म तस्माद्ब्रह्मणि ते स्थिताः ॥
(*B.G.* V. 19)

intermediate level are transmuted into the harmonious vision of the all-perfect power, grandeur and splendour of the divine as a person and a subject. In one sense man is overwhelmed by the majesty of God and makes an utter dedication of his being to God. This highest synthesis amounts to the fullness of devotion, knowledge and action. This highest synthesis demands a complete transmutation of our average and normal being and consciousness into the fullness and plenitude of divine bliss and supreme good. In the stage of complete transformation, the individual man becomes a voluntary agent (निमित्तमात्रम्) for the action of the divine. In this stage he is not actuated even by social altruism but becomes the instrument of the actions of the Divine for the maintenance of the cosmic wheel of becoming or *yajña-chakra*. This is the highest stage of divine Karma yoga. Krishna represents this action (*divya karma yoga*). It is the stage contemplated in the following verse of the Bhagavadgītā :

न मे पार्थास्ति कर्तव्यं त्रिषु लोकेषु किंचन ।
नानवाप्तमवाप्तव्यं वर्त एव च कर्मणि ॥
(*B. G.* III. 22)

Conclusion

Ours is a world of transition and crisis. Science has made our intellectual perceptions acute and sharp. It has probed into the processes of the cosmos. It has increased our capacities for action and authority. But our moral intuitions have not received adequate realization. We are sadly deficient in a scheme of values. The teachings of the Gītā have a great message for our times. To a collapsing and decadent world the Gītā preaches the sanctity of *daivi sampat*. Moral perfection has to be our goal, otherwise the advances of science will only mean a perilous journey to our destruction. Let us stick to this perennial philosophy. It is frightful to contemplate the speed with which humanity is heading to the depth of ruin and destruction. We need to synthesize a spirit of scientific audacity and adventure with a humble consciousness of the supremacy of reverence for values. The Hindu scriptures have always sanctioned the cultivation of the elevation of our character and personality. The conquest of the lower self is essential. One can never realize the state of Brahman without the complete subjugation of the lower passions. The heroic efforts needed in the establishment of sway over unregenerate passions and emotions serve to establish the firmness of our character and being. According to the Gītā a deep perception of truth is essential for this moral realization.[15] Hence what we need is to combine the cultivation of the knowledge of the world with a deep perception of the basal principles of all existence. Science is concerned with the first part — a pursuit of knowledge. Ethics is concerned with the refinement of the course of our conduct. What we need is a synthesis of scientific knowledge and moral piety.[16] The realization of this synthesis demands an inwardization of ultimate truth. Some sort of this synthesis was provided in the lives of Pythagoras, Plato, Spinoza, Pascal, Whitehead and Rama Tirtha. The Gītā teaches a renunciation of all localism and parochialism. It places before man a supremely noble and inspiring goal. It teaches with great sincerity and earnestness the gospel of the moralization and spiritualization of our lives.

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[15] R. Otto in *The Original Gita*, p. 120, has pointed out some Western parallels to the Yoga of the *Bhagavadgita*. He mentions the *Teshubah* of the Old Testament, the *Metanoia* of the New Testament and the *Apatheia* and the *Ataraxia* of the Stoic system. He further says on p. 243 : "It is by no means the Yogin's purpose to exalt action and its accomplishment nor to show how proficiency therein is acquired. Rather he intends to indicate how, with respect to the action which is in fact unavoidable, the danger is to be averted of being stricken by the fatality which always attends all action, as such. Of Fichte's 'joyous doing of the right', as of his 'vocation of man for joyously active work', and again of Nietzsche's 'manifestation of power', this Hindu Ethics knows absolutely nothing and would never have comprehended it."

[16] In this sense it can be stated that a true '*Lebensphilosophie*' (Philosophy of life) can be built only by the joint cultivation of *Geisteswissenschaft* (science of the spirit) and *Naturwissenschaft* (science of nature).

JESUS CHRIST AND VEDANTA

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

I

Christ's whole life is a wonderful saga of applied Vedanta.

How could it be? you may ask in wonder. Did Christ read the Upaniṣads? Did he read the Brahmasūtras? Did he learn from an Indian teacher? He did not have to. This might seem intriguing. But that is it.

What does Vedanta teach? It teaches truths about God and reality and the human soul.

Have we not heard it said that God is truth? Truth that is God has not to travel. It cannot, either. You and I can travel because we are not everywhere. But how could God travel? If there was a gap in the universe where God is not already, He would have been buried in that gap long ago.

That is why Sri Ramakrishna says, what is not here, is not there too.

This precisely explains how Christ could so wonderfully embody in his life the truths of Vedanta. In fact, Christ is one of the most shining and inspiring exemplifiers of Vedanta, both in his life and in his teachings.

II

If we close our eyes and think of Christ's life, what idea comes to our mind most powerfully? It is the idea of *complete self-immolation* for the sake of God and man.

It is said in the Rig-Veda that the Supreme Spirit sacrificed Himself and out of that sacrifice arose the creation. That is the pattern of the Supreme Spirit. Every single image of God-men or great human beings, which moves our hearts profoundly and transmutes our very inner being, is cast in that pattern of the Supreme Spirit.

Self-giving is the way to everlasting life. That is the eternal law. Christ embodied this law in the mightiest manner possible.

But why do we give ourselves to anyone—God or man? It is out of love. Christ was a person of a single passion, of a love which flowed equally toward God and men.

That love which does not flow to God but only to men is ignorance. That love which does not flow to men, but only to God is ignorance too. For God abstracted from His creatures is not Himself.

At night Christ communed with God. During the day he administered to the multitudes. This is true worship. It is the worship of the totality of God and not of the truncated God. But in giving, what you give is important. More important is how you give. But most important is why you give, or your motive in giving.

We may give something which may harm or corrupt the receiver. Whatever we give out of the impure stuff of our being cannot help the receiver. We may give in a way which may harm ourselves. When we give arrogantly and out of conceit it harms us. We become smaller than what we are, our vision becomes veiled. And if we give out of evil motive, then we bind ourselves rather than free ourselves from māyā.

In its applied aspects, the principles of Vedanta manifest themselves in one's life by three stages. These are: (1) that of self-discipline, (2) that of self-transformation, and (3) that of self-immolation in the service of others. One reaches fulfilment and perfection, as understood in Vedanta, through these three stages.

In the life of Christ we find manifest all these three stages. Of course there is no record of the details of the spiritual disciplines he practised. There are however, broad hints to prove that he did practise spiritual disciplines. Vedanta lays the greatest emphasis on self-discipline through proper spiritual practices. Without self-discipline we cannot even intellectually understand the subtle truths of religion.

Some of us may wonder : what need could an incarnation of God have of spiritual disciplines? Well, when God assumes a human body, he has to act like a human being. Otherwise he cannot impress human beings. If a prince assumes the role of a beggar on the stage he must appear shabbily dressed by wearing torn clothes. God-man has therefore to play the man, even though his divine consciousness is never dimmed. He is no doubt born perfect, yet he has to assume man's imperfection and has to apparently work for attaining that perfection. It is not a sort of divine hypocrisy but a drama. Imitation of Christ would not be possible by man, if imitation of man were not done by Christ. If Christ had not to go through any of our struggles and agonies what meaning could his life have for us?

And when the struggles are gone through, any record of them will show that they are as real as man's struggles.

As to the practice of spiritual disciplines, it would appear that Christ had been from his boyhood diligent about his heavenly Father's business. This we know from his own words.

His parents used to go to Jerusalem every year to attend the feast of Passover. One year they took the boy Jesus with them. When they returned home in Nazareth, to their surprise, they discovered that the boy had not returned with them. (It is however surprising that they knew of it only after coming home!) Anyway, they went back to Jerusalem. After three days' search the boy was found in the temple discussing philosophy with the doctors, both hearing and asking them questions.

His mother Mary said to him, in a tone of slight accusation, 'Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.' The reply Christ gave them was very revealing: 'And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?' He was obviously not meaning Joseph's carpentry business. It was the heavenly Father's business that Christ sought to be about even from his early boyhood. (St. Luke II verses 41 to 52).

When Christ was in his twenties, John the Baptist was a renowned and electrifying preacher. He was an austere man who attracted many people. People from Jerusalem, Judea and Jordan went to him in crowds to confess their sins and to be baptized.

John the Baptist knew, perhaps through his yogic powers, a teacher was in the offing whose shoes he was not worthy to bear. And if he was baptizing people with only water, that teacher would baptize people with the Holy Ghost and *with* fire.

This great teacher was none other than Jesus Christ. When like any other person Jesus also came to be baptized, John forbade him saying, 'I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?' And Jesus answering said unto him, "Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Then John the Baptist baptized him. (St. Matthew III, verses 1 to 17).

This shows how anxious Christ was to fulfil all righteousness; in other words, to practise spiritual disciplines.

Then we have it on record that Christ fasted for forty days and forty nights in the wilderness. After this great fast it is said that he was 'ahungered.' This would show how deeply absorbed he was in prayer and meditation. He must have been totally oblivious of his body and its demands.

That Jesus practised spiritual disciplines most intensely and successfully is proved by the fact of his power to conquer all the temptations offered by the devil. This is the proof of his attaining self-regeneration or transformation. (St. Matthew IV. verses 1 to 11).

Then from obscurity Christ suddenly appears as a teacher and a healer of great profundity and power. Even his first public utterance is that of a perfected man who is conscious of his might and mission. He said to Simon called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, who were fishing in the sea of Galilee, 'Come and follow me and I will make you fishers of men.'

This is the voice of a perfected person who can lead others to perfection. It is not the voice of a mere saint, but of a saint-maker, it is the voice of a Saviour.

Christ's teaching-healing career lasted between one to three years and was focussed largely in Galilee. He incurred the displeasure of professional religious men and also the suspicion of Rome and this led to his crucifixion on the outskirts of Jerusalem. He was only thirty-three when he died.

A person who could walk on the sea, rebuke the storm to calmness, feed the multitude with five loaves and fish, give back power of sight to the blind, make the lame walk, call the dead man back to life—could he not, if he had wished, escape the crucifixion? He could have. But he would not.

When Judas betrayed him and he was about to be taken prisoner by the armed soldiers, one of his disciples drew his sword and struck a servant of the high priest and smote off his ear. Jesus was shocked and rebuked him sharply saying: '...Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?'

This proves that Christ did not want to save himself. Because he was cast in the pattern of the Supreme Spirit who sacrificed himself for the sake of creation.

Thus we find in Christ's life the most amazing fulfilment of the three aspects of applied Vedanta, viz., self-discipline, self-regeneration and self-immolation.

III

Christ and his teachings are inseparable. What he taught flowed directly from his entire being. His words were the very vibrations of his soul.

'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.'

Now we may say about the teachings of Christ, they are but God become words. And what words are they! There is no end to the power-reserve of Christ's words.

Entering into the hearts of the millions of people, they have been transforming their lives for two thousand years. Human civilization, specially in the West, what glory could it be proud of, if the Christ-phenomenon is taken out of the picture? It has been said about the great epic of India, the *Rāmāyaṇa*: 'As long as mountains will stand on earth, and rivers will flow, so long the *Rāmāyaṇa* will be read on earth.' The same can be said of the words of Christ too. Their saving power will ever remain undimmed because they are but God become words.

Christ was not a theoretician or a metaphysician. He was a saviour. He was a person of one love and of a single concern. That one concern was: how man can rise to God.

In the teachings of Christ there are three aspects which wonderfully conform to the basic principles of Vedanta. The three aspects of his teachings may be broadly said to be: (1) The fact of God, (2) The act of man's rising Godward, and (3) The way of living a Godly life here on earth.

As to the fact of God, Christ teaches that God *is*. He not only *is*, but He loves. He not only loves, those who are good, but also those who are not so good, and those who are positively bad. And He, as the parable of the prodigal son will show, is ready to do anything to reclaim the fallen. Moreover by sending forth His Son and making him go through the crucifixion He proved that He is prepared to undergo unlimited self-suffering for redeeming man. This is the image of God that comes to us through the life and teachings of Christ.

And they are in all their details entirely Vedantic. Vedanta acknowledges that the fact of God, even when it is acknowledged as a fact, will always be understood in three different ways, according to man's inner evolution. For the body-bound man God is extra-cosmic. For the man who has evolved mentally, God is intra-cosmic. Creation is within God. We are the part and He is the whole. For the man who is further evolved inwardly, God is simply identical with the Spirit of man. Ātman is Brahman. The first represents the dualistic concept of God. The second, the qualified non-dualistic concept of God. And the third, the non-dualistic concept of God.

As the Hindu understands it, in the teachings of Christ all these aspects of Vedanta are represented. In the idea of God in heaven we have the dualistic concept. In the idea of the vine and its branches we have the qualified non-dualistic aspect. In the idea of 'I and my Father are one,' we have the non-dualistic concept.

To be sure Christ did not deliberately conform to these Vedantic ideas of God. In fact these ideas were philosophically formulated long after Christ. Yet these teachings, on the basis of which these philosophical schools of Vedanta grew later, were there in the scriptures of the Hindus.

More important than the concept of God is the *fact* of God in the teachings of Christ. You cannot read the New Testament without 'smelling' God, as it were. Christ's teachings bring to us most powerfully this idea that God is the greatest fact of life, and beyond. Hence life is futile if it is not lived entirely for His sake. What worth is the branch that is cut off from the vine. Says Christ:

> 'Abide in me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.
>
> 'I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing.' (St. John 15, verses 4-5).

The fact of God, when understood in a proper way by any person, is sure to become the most revolutionary and agonizing fact of his life. Those who have heard that God is, and yet can sleep over this fact, has not understood the fact in relation to life. When it is understood, life like a river will flow Godward. How to make the life flow Godward is the greatest practical question of any religion.

In our movement Godward how far can we go? Vedanta says: we can see God. We can realize our perfect identity with the Supreme Spirit. The Upaniṣad says: This Ātman is verily Brahman, the Supreme Spirit. Christ says: 'The kingdom of God is within you.' That is to say, man can attain such perfection as is indistinguishable from that of God.

Christ's view in this regard is entirely Vedantic. 'Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God.' 'Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect.' In regard to man's capacity to see God, Christ speaks so definitely. He asserts that man can attain the perfection that is God's. How could it be possible unless the soul of man or Ātman and the Supreme Spirit were identical?

Vedanta is a religion of transcendental affirmation. In the Upaniṣads the Rishis address human beings as: 'children of immortality.' Christ also addresses men in the same language. To say that the kingdom of God is within you is the same as saying, you are children of immortality. In the Sermon on the Mount he addresses the people gathered there and says: 'Ye are the salt of the earth,' 'Ye are the light of the world.'

'The Kingdom of God is within you,' is the greatest truth taught by Christ. To those who perhaps were not prepared to take that much, he said, 'The Kingdom of God is at hand.' Not only that, He also said, '...that Kingdom of God suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.' What does it mean? It means that in the spiritual life heroic self-effort greatly counts. 'Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.' Again, 'Thou shalt know the truth and the truth will make you free.' This teaching of Christ is entirely identical with the Vedantic teaching of self-lifting by the Self, emphasized by Sri Krishna and all other great teachers.

Christ had such great faith in the might of man that he preached the most difficult discipline of non-resistance to evil to all and sundry :

> 'Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.
>
> 'And if any man will sue you at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.
>
> 'And whoso shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.'

The common run of man anywhere in the world have not proved themselves equal to this great trust of Christ. Only great world-renouncing monks could practise non-resistance to evil.

In Vedanta, non-resistance to evil is never preached to common men. It is enjoined only for the world-renouncing monks. Others, who have worldly responsibilities, are asked to resist evil and subdue it.

In this regard Vedantic teaching is different from that of Christ. Vedanta, however, acknowledges that non-resistance to evil is a supreme ideal. Vedanta, however, realistically points out that non-resistance to evil can never be practised by all and sundry.

It is not that Christ was not aware of human frailties. He knew that while the spirit is willing the flesh is weak. There are those who do not know how to ask, seek and knock, and take the Kingdom of God by violence. What would they do? To them Christ taught heroic love for God and heroic self-surrender. We say 'heroic' love advisedly because God, according to Christ, is to be loved with all one's heart, soul, might and being. And it has to be a love of a single flame, for

> 'No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.'

The heroic love taught by Christ goes hand in hand with heroic self-surrender, on which he laid great emphasis. Asking man to place his utter trust in God, Christ advised him not to take any thought for the morrow. His was in fact an absolutism of devotion, which corresponds to the self-resignation taught by Sri Ramanuja, the teacher of qualified non-dualistic Vedanta.

While considering the act of man's rising Godward, naturally the question of the impediments on the way arises. What are these impediments? They are commonly called sins. What was Christ's attitude towards sin?

In Christianity as it is preached by the Church, as we all know, there is much sin-talk. Man is considered to be a born sinner. In modern Vedanta sometimes we tend to underemphasize the fact of sin. It is good to know that in the tradition of Vedanta the fact of sin is duly acknowledged. The best modern approach to the fact of sin would be an empirical and psychological approach and not a theological approach. Then we can avoid undue emphasis on sin.

Vedanta explains sin as the product of ignorance. In ignorance we get identified with our body and mind. From that identification arises desire. And desire is the root of all sins. As long as we are in ignorance sin has a terrific binding power on our souls. But then sin is in *māyā*. And Ātman is any day more powerful than *māyā*. Man is that Ātman essentially. One day, when *māyā* drops off, the entire structure of sins falls down for that particular individual. Therefore there is nothing permanent about sin. Assert the Ātman and sin is shattered.

This Vedantic view of sin seems to be exactly Christ's view too. Surprisingly enough the word 'sin' is not uttered by Christ even once in the 111 sayings in the Sermon on the Mount. Elsewhere too Christ did not talk much about sin. Then we are not at all sure Christ ever spoke of 'original sin'. If the Church speaks more of sin than salvation, Christ spoke more of salvation than of sin. He always held out before men the fact that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand; nay, it is within you, and that man has the possibility of becoming as perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect. Man can verily see God! This is Christ's most positive and optimistic message.

To those who have sinned — and who have not more or less — Christ's simple advice is: 'Repent in all sincerity.' Have faith in the Lord's concern for the straying souls and His redeeming power. And, instead of merely saying, 'Lord, Lord,' do His will. Obey the commandments in life!

Christ's attitude to sin is also discerned in his attitude to sinners. He was always exceedingly kind to the sinners. All his fire and blast fell upon the hypocrites and traders in religion. He, so far as I know from what I have read of the New Testament, never uttered a harsh word to any of the so-called 'sinners'. Take the woman who was going to be stoned for committing adultery. He cleverly saved her from a painful death sanctioned by the law of the land. He only softly said to her: 'Sin no more.'

Then we find the case of Mary Magdalene. What a transformation he wrought in her through sheer affection! It was to Mary Magdalene that he first appeared after resurrection. Why did he do this singular honour to this erstwhile sinner? No act of a God-man is insignificant or without meaning. It would appear that Mary Magdalene was one of the pilot-projects, of Christ, in a sin-conscious world. By granting her the supreme grace of first appearance after resurrection, he holds her before us as an example of how a sinning person can become sinless. He appears to tell us: 'Look at Magdalene, what she was and what she has become, by just loving me. Are you like her? Then you too have as glorious a future as her's. Only, you will have to love me as she loved me. If you are better than her, it goes without saying that you can surely get transformed. The secret, however, I may whisper to your ear: Love me!'

On Calvary, when he was already nailed to the cross and was in agony, one of the thieves who was also crucified said to him, 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom.' Promptly said the Lord, 'Verily I say unto thee, today shalt thou be with me in Paradise.' And what did he say about those who were committing the most heinous sin of crucifying an innocent person, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' In the eyes of the Lord, all our sins are acts of this 'not knowing.' That is what in Vedanta is caled *'ajñāna'* or ignorance.

We cannot but take our sins seriously for they burn us. But in the eyes of God they are like dust clinging to our raiment. Therefore the Holy Mother would say: 'If my children smear themselves with dust and dirt, it is my duty as their mother to cleanse them, and take them in my arms.'

Sri Krishna, one of the greatest teachers of Vedanta, laid great emphasis on what he called the welfare of the people, as a spiritual discipline. He said:

> 'As the ignorant act from attachment to action, so should the wise act without attachment, desiring the welfare of the world.'

This social consciousness of teachers of Vedanta is fully reflected by Christ in his teachings. The social forces which we help generate around us have their bearing, helpful or unhelpful, on our spiritual strivings. One of the most significant teachings of Christ bears out this fact. He says:

> 'Therefore if thou bringest thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee;
>
> 'Leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.' (St. Mathew, V. 23-24).

This social consciousness, however, can be an instrument of self-righteousness, unless it is cultivated with utter humility. Very deliberately Christ said, 'Judge not that ye be not judged.' One has first to cast out the beam from one's own eye before one can see clearly to cast out the mote from his brother's eye. Moreover, Christ said, 'Thou must love thy neighbour as thyself.'

Why should one do so? The answer to this question will be clear as we consider the third aspect of Christ's teachings, viz., the way of Godly life on earth.

Sri Krishna says in the Gita:

> 'He who judges pleasure or pain everywhere, by the same standard as he applies to himself, that yogi, O Arjuna, is regarded as the highest.'

This is one of the grandest teachings of Vedanta, to see all in oneself, and oneself in all. The rationale of this teaching is in the spiritual homogeneousness of Ātman. You should love your neighbour as yourself because your neighbour is verily yourself.

This grand teaching of Vedanta finds glorious exemplification in the life of Christ. Moreover, Christ gave to the world this truth in his own inimitable words. He said, 'If you have fed the hungry, if you have given drink to the thirsty, if you have given shelter to the stranger, clothed the naked, nursed the sick, visited the prisoner in jail, if you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.' 'And if you have not done it, you have not done it unto me.'

Vedanta warns us: beware how you behave in this world, for God is going about. God is everywhere. Whom do you venture to oppress? Whom do you dare to insult or injure? O fool, is there anyone anywhere but living, breathing God going about? Fall on your face and worship.

In the *Śvetāśwatara Upaniṣad* this great fact of God going about is taught in most inspiring terms:

> All faces are his faces; all heads his heads; all necks his necks. He dwells in the hearts of all beings.
>
> His hands and feet are everywhere; His eyes, heads and faces are everywhere; His ears are everywhere; He exists encompassing all.
>
> Thou art woman, thou art man; thou art youth and maiden too. Thou as an old man totterest along on a staff; it is Thou alone, when born, assumest diverse forms.
>
> Thou art the dark blue bee; thou art the green parrot with red eyes; thou art the thunder-cloud, the seasons, and the seas. Thou art beginningless and all-pervading, from Thee all worlds are born.

The case being that God is going about, whatever we have done to anyone, or failed to do to anyone — has all been done or not done to God alone.

Therefore, as the Hindu understands it Vedanta vibrates in Christ's teachings through and through.

This act whether or not it is acknowledged by the Church, requires to be understood by all thinking religious people of the Western world.

Recently this thought-wave has been raised in this country (America):

'Today Christianity faces one of the most subtle and powerful, and therefore one of the most dangerous, opponents that has ever threatened it. This adversary is the system of Hindu philosophy of Vedanta.

'The time has come for the inevitable choice between Vedanta and Christ. And naturally it will be Christ. Otherwise it will be the ruination of Christianity.'

If we may say so, Christ is not the property of any nation or section of humanity. He belongs to all mankind. Christ belongs to eternity. Long before America was discovered, Christ was worshipped in India, and we have been worshipping Him for nearly two thousand years. We, in India, received his Gospel from the apostle St. Thomas.

He is a poor Christian who wants to limit Christ to the frame of his small understanding. He is a poor Vedantin who does not fall on his knees and worship Christ as one of the finest exemplifiers of the principles of Vedanta.

For us Vedantins nurtured in the Ramakrishna tradition, Christ is the very essence of our soul. No one can take Him out of it.

Don't you remember that vision of Sri Ramakrishna, when the Son of Man with his deep seeing eyes drew near and merged in him? This great mystic merger is one of the greatest facts of spiritual history, the meaning of which we should humbly seek to understand.

It is impossible to love Sri Ramakrishna and yet not love Christ, for how can you, and when will you, keep out the Christ who has become merged with Sri Ramakrishna?

Today we are emerging, in these mighty times of man, from the narrow comfortable and timid provincialism of religion; we must now face the storms of Truth and allow our ideas to be fashioned by their impact.

Vedanta is not going from anywhere to anywhere. It has come to stay everywhere. No power can drive it away, and Christ's own power is its proof, its solicitude, and its love.

BAGALA IN THE GUISE OF SARASVATI

M. P. PANDIT

Bagalā in the guise of Sarasvati—that is how Vivekananda describes Sri Sarada Devi who embodied the Spirit of Sri Ramakrishna and made his Grace living to innumerable souls even after his withdrawal from the physical world. From a simple village girl to the august Motherhood of spiritual giants like Swami Brahmananda—that is the story of Sri Sarada Devi told in utmost detail in the book, *Holy Mother*[1] by Swami Nikhilananda. The author is particularly qualified to write this biography for he is himself an initiated disciple of Sri Sarada Devi and had the privilege of knowing and moving with her personally.

Saradamani was born at Jayarambati (Bengal) on December 22, 1853, her birth being heralded by two significant visions vouchsafed to both of her parents, testifying to her superhuman origin. She was married to Sri Ramakrishna in 1859 when she was hardly six. Though she had a number of experiences of the supraphysical kind as she grew up, the most important was the one at Dakshineswar on June 5, 1872. For it was on that day that her husband worshipped her as the Divine Mother. That may be said to be a turning point in her life: Sri Ramakrishna either installed the Divine Presence in her or awakened the divinity in her on that memorable night. The author gives a graphic description of the ceremony, *Śodaṣi Pūjā*, and remarks:

> '. . . most significant. For Sri Ramakrishna it signified the final destruction of lust and the complete triumph of the spirit over matter, the total suppression of the animal in man. He recognised divinity where ordinary men are least disposed to see it. Sri Ramakrishna, through this worship, gave a special status to his wife, rare in the spiritual history of the world. . . . By this act he made her the full sharer of his spiritual glory. She attained the exalted position of a teacher without going through the usual disciplines practised by saints.' (pp. 43-44)

This is not to say that Sri Sarada Devi had all smooth sailing. The biographer describes vividly the several austerities she underwent, e.g. the Panchatapa, subjection to fivefold heat, the several penalties she had to pay by way of physical sufferings as the price for the acceptance of devotees and disciples along with their legacies (good and bad), and the inconveniences she had to put up with for daring to transgress petty social customs when they conflicted with her sense of duty to God.

Though many of his devotees, encouraged by Sri Ramakrishna, had come to regard her as their spiritual mother even during his lifetime, it was only after his passing away in 1886, that she came to assume her rightful role as the Shakti who linked the disciples to the Master and made his vast spiritual estate accessible and available to all who sought for it. The author narrates the circumstances in which she was led to give her first initiation while at Vrindavan:

> 'One day Sri Ramakrishna appeared before her and asked her to give Swami Yogananda formal

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[1] *Holy Mother*: By Swami Nikhilananda. Pub. George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London. Pp. 334. Price 32 sh.

initiation. He even told her the mantra with which she should initiate him. Holy Mother thought it was a freak of her mind. . . . But the vision was repeated on each of the two days following. On the third day, she said to the Master: "I do not even speak to Yogen. How can I initiate him?" Sri Ramakrishna asked her to have Yogin-Mā with her at the time of initiation. Swami Yogananda also, in a vision, received similar instruction from the Master. At last the Mother gave him the initiation and Swami Yogananda thus became her first disciple. This was the beginning of a new chapter in her life.' (p. 99).[2]

Once started there was no stopping. She was called upon to take up the spiritual ministry in succession to Sri Ramakrishna and for full thirty years she gave all she was and all she had in furtherance of the spread of the Master's message. Whether it was in the matter of choosing fit disciples or of reaching the Grace to the needy or of accepting the offerings from people, Sri Sarada Devi did nothing on her own: she was exclusively guided by Sri Ramakrishna in a very concrete way. She was in constant, palpable touch with him and regarded her work done when she put others in contact with him. Swami Nikhilananda records in these pages instructive accounts of her dealings with men and women, of all conditions in life, with disciples, Eastern and Western, and brings out her personality which evoked the veneration of many a spiritual stalwart and drew the hearts of all who came under her influence.

Her instructions were always direct, couched in the simplest terms. On Japa for instance:

> 'When a pure soul performs Japa, he feels as if the holy name bubbles up spontaneously from within himself. He does not have to make an effort to repeat the name.
>
> The natural tendency of the mind is to run this way or that. Through Japa it is directed to God. While repeating God's name, if one sees His form and becomes absorbed in it, then the Japa stops.
>
> Regularity should be observed in the practice of Japa and meditation. It is true that there are certain auspicious moments when the mind becomes easily collected. But no one can say when the auspicious moment will come. It comes so suddenly that one has no hint of it beforehand. . . . The conjunction of day and night is the most auspicious time for calling on God.'

While she was all for spiritual freedom, she took care not to unnecessarily disturb the faith of the laity in governing the conventions of the society. On being asked why, she replied: 'The Master was not born to break traditions.' (p. 290).

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[2] In an interesting passage the author observes: 'Generally the Mother needed only a few minutes to initiate a disciple. Someone later asked Swami Saradananda why he took half an hour to perform this task. The Swami said that Holy Mother could tell by a glance or a touch whether the Master had accepted the aspirant, whereas he required long meditation to be assured of this acceptance.'

'Whatever you eat you must first dedicate to God; you should not take any other kind of food. The quality of your blood depends on the quality of the food you take. If you take consecrated food your blood and your mind will be purified, you will find strength. If your mind is pure, your faith and love will be pure.'

* * *

'Dreams about God are true. The Master used to forbid people to recount their dreams about Him even to him.'

* * *

'One must cast aside indolence and put one's mind to prayer and meditation regularly. At Dakshineswar I felt unwell one day and rose a little later than usual. In those days I used to get up at three in the morning. The next day I rose later still. Gradually I noticed that I no longer felt inclined to get up early. I said to myself, "Now you are in the clutches of indolence." Then I made up my mind and began to rise early again and everything was as before. A little determination is necessary to maintain these good habits.'

* * *

'Prayer and meditation, or pilgrimage or even earning money, all these should be done during the earlier part of one's life. . . . In old age, one's body is filled with phlegm, one's physical and mental strength are weakened.'

—HOLY MOTHER.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND INDIAN CULTURE

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

SWAMI PREMESHANANDA

In the West science at its beginning was treated as an enemy by the orthodox Church. Galileo had to die in prison. Some of the other scientists too were persecuted. On the other hand in India, due to political subjugation, no research in the material sciences was possible. The British who then ruled India had tried in every way to put restraint on Sri Jagadish Chandra Bose, the then scientific genius of India, from prosecuting his researches.

It was at this time that Swamiji came. He applied to religion the very methods used by other sciences; of reasoning, experimentation and the like. Thus he showed that religion stood to gain by the scientific methods, and established a synthesis between religion and science. This is one of his wonderful achievements.

Again, at a time when we failed to understand the scriptures by following the age-old traditional methods, it was through Swamiji's commentary on them that we gained faith anew in them. These scriptural truths were really beyond the comprehension of the ordinary people. But due to the modern discoveries of science it has been possible for us to understand the secrets of Nature, the working of the inert matter and the like and this in turn has given us a peep into these truths.

At one place, in connection with the discourses on the Gita, I was speaking about creation to a group of young men. One amongst them was a student of medicine and had read biology. I found, amongst them all, he was able to grasp these subtle truths better than the rest. In truth the traditional teachers of scriptures and pandits were completely ignorant of the subtle facts of the phenomenal world, as a result they could not put forward proper similes or exact analogies to explain suprasensual truths. They used to arrive at their conclusions with the help of logic and polemics alone. But it was impossible to acquire knowledge that way. However, with the aid of modern scientific knowledge and analogies, we could know something of them. Swamiji followed the modern mode of thinking to explain these subtle truths. Those who have studied the commentaries of the past and compared them with Swamiji's explanations of the scriptures, will be able to understand the exceptional grandeur of Swamiji's comments. This can be seen from the great popularity Swamiji's Raja Yoga has received in the West. It is said even in Russia the intellectuals have evinced interest in the study of this book.

VII

While speaking about the main tenets of the Vaishnavas viz. compassion to beings, taste for the Lord's name and service to the Vaishnavas (devotees of the Lord), Sri Ramakrishna once pointed out that this attitude of compassion on the part of one person to another smacks of a sense of egoism. So, he said, instead of considering it as compassion, one should do service to beings as veritable manifestations of Śiva (the Divine). But none amongst those present on the occasion, except Swamiji, could understand the depth, beauty and the sublime sense embedded in those few words of the Master. Coming out of the room Swamiji had remarked, 'Today I have heard very wonderful words which convey a new message to me. Should I get an opportunity I shall endeavour to broadcast it everywhere.'

When the common men hear about any uncommon ideas, they cannot evaluate them properly. They are carried away by whatever idea that gets a wide currency. For instance, Sri Chaitanya spoke of pure devotion to God long long ago and even today the most ignorant man talks glibly about it. No one, however, really understands what a lofty ideal it is and how difficult of attainment. Again in the Punjab, due to the wide and tremendous influence of the sannyasins, everyone talks like a Brahmajñāni, a knower of Brahman. Similarly at the present day people talk glibly of doing service to the 'Daridranarayanas'. But to do service to beings seeing the Divine in them — is it a trifling matter? It is a unique idea, a sublime ideal.

When this message first spread, it was thought of as very queer even by the learned people of Bengal. This point, I hope, will be clear if I narrate here an instance within my experience. Once I was staying for sometime at Svargashrama, a place near Hrishikesh. At that time one day all of a sudden Sri Rajen Ghosh, a scholar of Bengal, appeared there. He was a staunch follower of the Advaita philosophy of Sri Śankarācārya and was well read in that philosophy. He used to look down upon the sannyasins of the Ramakrishna Order for wasting their time, as he thought it, in the service of humanity, instead of engaging themselves in the study of Vedanta and meditation. One day, long before this meeting of ours, when I was at Belur Math, he had even deridingly remarked, 'It seems some say that Swami Vivekananda is an avatar of Sri Śankara!' That day I had not the courage to argue with such a well-versed person like him. But there at Svargashram he was quite another man, talking with me in a most cordial manner on the various topics of the scriptures. In the course of the talk he revealed that he had come to the northern parts, Uttarākhaṇḍ, in search of a realized soul and that though he had sought for them in many places he had not come across a single person who could come up to his idea of a realized soul. After a little while turning the discussion on to our organization I had referred to the lack of enthusiasm for the life of the spirit in our country, as also to the aristocratic class which had become physically weak. It was for this reason, I said, that Swami Vivekananda had prescribed this new approach — to do *shravaṇa*, *manana* and *nididhyāsana,* i.e. to hear, cogitate and meditate, as long as the body and mind could bear and the rest of the time serve all beings with the conviction that the Lord, the Supreme Self, resides in them all. Further, it was explained to him that the two approaches viz. to meditate on the idea that 'I am He', and to serve the beings with the conviction 'That Thou art', were fundamentally identical. As soon as Rajen Ghosh heard this explanation he leapt for joy and exclaimed, 'Excellent, Excellent.'* I was glad to notice in him the real grasp and assimilation of Swamiji's idea.

When, in the year 1915-16, we, in Sylhet, were just trying in our humble way to work out this idea of service to beings, the Pandits of the place felt offended and said, 'Service is the duty of the Śūdras. Now these devotees of Sri Ramakrishna are trying to reduce the whole country to the Śūdra mode of life.' However, these words of those people have a little meaning in it. For how can they, who were ignorant of the import of Brahma Vidya, accept jiva as manifestation of Śiva, the Divine? It is because of a lack of this conviction that the 'Daridranarayana seva' is turning out into a profession, a business with some people nowadays.

But one remarkable effect of the message of these great prophets is that, wherever these messages are recalled they overtly or covertly benefit mankind. In a nation in which, Sri Ramakrishna said, were such jealous people as would not even spit at a place if they were told that that would help any one, this idea of service practised with whatever motive, — to gain wealth, name, fame, or heaven — will certainly go a great way to the amelioration of its present condition.

Even if people maintain themselves by serving these poor of our country yet it will not be so harmful. On the other hand, if, however, they can realize the implications of this great message of Sri Ramakrishna preached by Swamiji, even a little, then it would enrich their lives and that of the country too. They would then have lived the ideal—'For one's own liberation and the benefit of mankind'. Only those who can think a little deeply will understand what great vistas of vision this one idea, viz., the 'Divine in man', can reveal if only it is made to reach man in every strata of the society.

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* Afterwards Rajen Ghosh joined the Ramakrishna Order and spent the rest of his life in meditation and prayer at the Banaras Sevashrama.

Now, how does this idea help those who are aspirants after liberation? If they can get at least an inkling into this great truth by applying their knowledge of Vedanta, it would certainly be possible for them to be free in this very life. For the person who can see Brahman in the jiva will be always and under all circumstances, thinking of Brahman. However, it is a long way yet to travel; people in general in India are not yet prepared for it, nay not even attracted towards Brahma Vidya. Should such a day dawn, by the grace of the Lord, when the life of the spirit would gain the upper hand again, this invaluable formula of Swamiji will certainly bring prosperity to our motherland. Will Swamiji's prophesy regarding the future of India which he made in his article 'Hinduism and Sri Ramakrishna' ever go in vain? We do not think so.

VIII

It is difficult for man to understand the ways of the Lord. He comes to us in our needs and comes too in the form of man to teach mankind the way of life. This time He came in the form of Sri Ramakrishna. Most of those who came in close contact with Sri Ramakrishna understood him only as a man. For us who read about him in books and have heard about him from his direct disciples, he was as a college professor is to a primary school student, an enigma, an unapproachable ideal. He was the full embodiment of Eternal Religion. Had not Swamiji explained Sri Ramakrishna's life, it would have remained a matter of simple worship for us all. We would not have ventured even to try to follow or imitate it.

One wonderful thing about Swamiji's teaching is that he preached religion like one of the exact sciences. So the intellectuals of Europe and America regarded his teachings with utmost respect. His teachings were so irresistible that even in England, which for the Indians of that time was like a heaven, a great place of pilgrimage, the learned and scholars too accepted him as their spiritual preceptor. This 'conquest of the West' had a tremendous effect on India. When the Indians saw that the people of England and America — who at that time in the eyes of the Indians were like gods and goddesses — left their own country and came to India to serve Swamiji's cause, the so-called learned, at least, could not ignore him. A great stir was created in the whole country on his return to India and that was, not only for the unique religious message he preached, but because of his 'conquest of the West'. This is why Sri Ramakrishna got his message preached to the West first through Swamiji. He knew that the slave nation was to be taught through the master. And once the interest was created it was easy for India to listen to his message. But for Swamiji's explanation the people of those depressing times when Sri Ramakrishna incarnated, would have perhaps simply honoured the Master as one of the great sages and been satisfied by mere ritual worship and offering of sweets. His message would have remained unheeded.

To what depths of distress India had sunk during those days, some might perhaps be able to visualize now, after independence. No doubt, after independence the country is progressing but it is not at all commensurate with the progress of time. If Swamiji's ideas are not widely spread and studied, there is little hope that our dependence on the West for everything, a habit that has been growing for generations now, will ever cease. If our people are not conscious of the grandeur of their own heritage and culture, they cannot be taught the ideal or message of Sri Ramakrishna. Therefore, it is of prime importance that the youth of the country should be given a man-making education as Swamiji envisaged. We, after having deliberated about the welfare of India all our life, now come to the definite conclusion that Swamiji's ideas are the only hope for our motherland.

(*Will be continued in the February issue*)

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(Latu Maharaj)

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

1883. 'About two months before the Durga puja once the Master took us to Jadu Mallick's residence at Pathuriaghata. Jadu Mallick was an old acquaintance of our Master. I saw him at his garden many times. There he started worshipping the deity Simhavahini. The Master, accompanied by us, went to see the Devi. After seeing the Divine Mother, the Master went to meet Jadu Mallick. Mallick, bare-bodied, was then lying flat on a marble-topped table. When he saw the Master, he said, with manifest joy, "Come, come, younger Bhattācharya. (He used to call the Master that way — elder Bhattācharya being Master's eldest brother, Sri Ramkumar.) Nowadays you are not to be seen this side, the Divine Mother has come, so you have come to see Her; that has reminded you of our existence." At this the Master, as if in a pique, replied, "What sort of man are you? Mother has come and you did not let us know of it?" Not to be defeated Jadu Babu retorted, "Look here younger Bhattācharya, don't play the rogue. I am yet to see one who keeps more news about Mother than you. It is only day before yesterday that Mother had come, and hardly had she settled Herself down than here you come. When did you give me time to send news to you?" Smiling, the Master said, "That is all right. Now bring Mother's *prasād* for me. Should I go away without taking anything here?" Jadu Babu, even in that lying posture, asked someone to bring *prasād*, which was immediately brought.

'The Master remained standing near the door, and the moment *prasād* was brought, he took it and went straight to the waiting carriage. He was about to get into the carriage, when Jadu Mallick said, "Would you not meet my mother?" Hearing this the Master, standing there, cried out, "O Jadu's mother, where are you? Will you not give me a glass of water?" Hearing the Master's voice, Jadu's mother came downstairs; and the Master took the glass of water from her hand, sipped once and got into the carriage. When the carriage started the devotees of the Master complained, "Sir, you should not come to such rich people again. These people had not even the courtesy to ask you to sit down! Why should you come to such people to invite insults?" At this the Master laughed and said, "They are worldly people. Day and night they are mad after worldly affairs. That in the midst of it all they should worship 'Mother Universal' is itself something worth noting. You do not do even that much. Why should you bother whether they invited me to take a seat or not? You came to see the Goddess, you have done that. Moreover you have taken the *prasād*. Is that not enough? How are you to understand the workings of their minds? Have you come to see the owner of the house that you should feel insulted at his not offering seats to you?" The critics were all silenced. . . . In this way the Master used to test us. He would say, "If you want to be a *sādhu* kill your ego first. You must not mind honour or insult."'

Lātu Maharaj told us many things about Jadu Mallick on different occasions and at different places. Some of these had occurred before Lātu Maharaj came to the Master. He had heard them from others and used to narrate them to us. We give them here:

'One day the Master told Jadu "Well Jadu, why do you keep yourself surrounded by a band of flatterers? Why do you keep their company so often?" Jadu replied, "They come of good families. They cannot beg. They are here to get something by way of favour. Where will they go if I drive them away?" The Master said, "Still I say don't mix so much with them. You may come to trouble." Jadu replied, "Well, younger Bhattācharya, if one is to be worldly one has to be surrounded with a batch of flatterers too."... One day the Master said, "Jadu you have amassed enough for 'here', what have you laid by for the 'hereafter'?" Without turning a hair, Jadu said, "Why, you are there, younger Bhattācharya, to ferry us across. It is in that hope that I have driven away all anxiety about it. If you do not do that much who will again call you the Deliverer of the fallen? It will bring discredit to your name. Don't, don't forget me on the last day. . . ." Jadu Mallick had amassed a great fortune, still he wanted more money. One day the Master said, "How strange it is Jadu, you have hoarded so much still you want more!" He said, "Younger Bhattācharya, do you really think covetousness ever abates? Just as you cannot give up your longing for the Lord, even so a man of the world can never give up his desire for more wealth. Again, why should he give it up? You are mad after the Lord, I am mad after His plenitude." Hearing this the Master was exceedingly glad and said, "If you have understood it in sooth, you need have no worries Jadu; tell me, do you really believe it? Or is it just a cant?" Jadu said, "Is it unknown to you, younger Bhattācharya, that nobody could hide anything from you?" ...One day the Master told him, "Well, Jadu dear, formerly you used to call on the Lord devotedly, what has happened to you that you become so absent-minded while taking His name?" Jadu's prompt answer was, "Ever since I saw you I don't feel like calling on the Lord. I feel when I take his name I cannot set my mind to worldly affairs. So I have become indifferent to Him and have concentrated my mind on earning wealth, on looking after worldly matters." Do you know what the Master said in reply to that? "Don't go so far as that. What joy is there to go round and round with blinkers over one's eyes like the oilman's bullock?" Jadu's retort was, "The inexorable law of Karma. Can you deny it?"... One day Jadu's mother was feeding the Master in an inner apartment. Seeing it was getting late Devendra Majumdar was getting annoyed. At that time we were all called there for taking refreshments. When we returned I was surprised to see Devenbabu catching hold of the Master's feet and shedding profuse tears. A few days after I asked Devenbabu the reason for his sorrow. Devenbabu said, "Dear Lātu, what shall I say? Bad thoughts came to my mind. I doubted the Master's character. When we went inside to take our refreshments I saw Jadu's mother feeding our Master with her own hands and was being bathed in tears. That made me understand that her attitude towards the Lord (and our Master whom she looked upon as no other but the Lord Himself) was that of a mother towards her child. And my wicked mind took it to be so bad as that! Master knows the inner working of our minds. So he cleared my doubts that way"... One day Hriday came to meet the Master. As he was prohibited from entering the precincts of the Kali temple, the Master took him to Jadu Mallick's garden... The Master used to go now and then to Jadu's garden for a stroll when there was a crowd at the Dakshineswar garden. He used to take brothers Naren, Rākhāl, Bhavanāth and others for private talks on spiritual matters to Jadu's garden. I have heard that it was at this garden that the Master gave Naren a taste of spiritual experience. Whenever Jadu used to come to his garden he would request the Master to come there and to sing a few of his soul-enthralling songs. Sometimes he used to bring a songster whose songs the Master immensely liked. One day this gentleman sang a song in front of the Master, from Girish Babu's *Chaitanya-Līlā*. Hearing this song the Master felt a desire to witness that theatrical performance.

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1882-84. 'During the Durga Puja the Master used to visit the houses of devotees. On the *Saptami* day he would visit the houses of Ramababu and Sureshbabu, on the *Ashṭami*, those of Keshav Babu, Adharbabu, Ramababu and others; on the *Navami*, he used to stay at Dakshineswar and would not go anywhere. Once he went to Adharbabu's at about 10 p.m. On the *Dashami* day he generally visited Navakumar Chatterji's house at Dakshineswar itself. On the *Ekadashi*, the devotees used to come to Dakshineswar... I have heard, as long as Mathurbabu lived the Master used to spend all these days at his residence. After his death he stopped going there. On the Kojagari Lakshmi Puja day your Keshav Babu used to come to the Master at Dakshineswar. He was accompanied by a large number of his followers... Once the Master entertained Keshav Babu and his party with puffed rice and coconut-scrappings and with "something that grows inside a palm fruit" (perhaps the kernel inside a green palm fruit). He took these simple things with joy in the company of all. Such a great man and there was no pride in him! On the Kali Puja night they used to illuminate the temple, every nook and corner of it, including the bank of the Ganges. That day, before he went to worship Mother Kali, Ramlal used to get permission from the Master, who would be in his own room. At night the Master used to go to the temple. The whole day and night the Nahabat used to send vibrations of enchanting music to all sides... Once the Kali Puja fell on a Saturday night. The Master told us to perform *japa* the whole night. He said it was a very auspicious night, and would give success quickly. He himself went on singing songs till very late into the night... On the Jagaddhātri puja day he used to take us to Manomohanbabu's house. There, on one occasion, a man played on *khol* (a type of mridanga) so enthrallingly that the Master went into samadhi.'

(*To be continued*)

THE GREAT EQUATION

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

S. K. GUPTA

Aaruni: As I said, the plan and pattern of the previously dissolved universes lay in a seed state in that Eternal Principle. It designed to unfold it, to regenerate the universe according to plan. To achieve that end, It compounded the triple subtle principles in such a way that one of these predominated while the other two remained secondary in all objects so that these are designated by the properties of the predominating entity. Thus, Fire or Energy, would be that object in which the principal ingredient is Energy and so on. It is through this synthesis that the subtle becomes gross — the imperceptible perceptible. Thus appeared the Virat — the Vast — the Cosmic Structure and then other material bodies according to Its Idea, design or plan. The Sat, the Spirit, the Eternal Principle radiated Its light on these objects, reflected Itself on these, as does the sun on clear water. Let me emphasize that every material object is synthetic, the compound of these three primordial entities, Fire, Water and Earth.

Śwetaketu: How does this chemical composition become perceptible sir?

Aaruni: You conceive fire by perceiving the colour of the flame. It is only colour that comes in contact with your sense of sight. The fire that you see is the synthetic fire. It appears principally as red but has also white and blue tinge (white heat, blue flames). Now red is the colour of the original principle of energy, white is the colour of the original principle of liquidity and blue or black is the colour of the principle of solidity. Bereft of this sensation of triple colour, the concept of

Fire will have no content on the visual plane. You see a crystal appearing red through the proximity of a red hibiscus. You conceive it to be a ruby but as soon as the hibiscus is withdrawn, you discover that it is not a ruby. Similarly if this tri-colour is withdrawn, the concept becomes empty of content.

Śwetaketu : I don't follow. Are these colours the material ingredients of fire just as yarn is of a piece of cloth so that the concept of fire is negatived by the elimination of the colours as the cloth ceases to exist if the yarn is removed ?

Aaruni : Not precisely. The concept of fire is just nominal, a way of expression. It arises out of the subjective interpretation of the objective experience of the three colours. It is a mental construct. You perceive nothing but colours, the concepts that you intellectually form out of these sense data, are just names, verbal expressions. Igneous celestial bodies like the sun, the moon, lightning etc. are also similarly constituted and experienced. Even that great Orb of light, the Sun has the three colours, red, white and dark. If you shoot through space, you will be enveloped in 'darkness visible' as you approach nearer and nearer the Sun.

The visual percepts of solid or liquid matter can also be reduced to colours. The entire visible universe is just a magnificent pageantry of colours.

By a process of recession, you will ultimately come to the Original Unitary Principle 'Sat'—as the Content of all Concepts—for earth is only a mutation of water, water a mutation of fire and fire a mutation of 'Sat'. All these mutations are just names, forms of expression, the Ultimate Reality is *Sat*.

Śwetaketu : But ether and air have been left out, they do not form any part of the 'triple alliance'—they cannot be included in any of the three primordial principles. Similarly the sensations of touch, taste, smell and hearing have not been explained. So how can it be said that the Knowledge of 'Sat' leaves nothing unknown? There must be some other principle to explain these residuary phenomena.

Aaruni : This is indeed an apparent difficulty. A little thinking would show that a thing with colour has all the other qualities. Let us take Fire, it crackles and generates heat, so with the sensation of colour, you also get the sensation of sound and touch. The presence of the quality of sound implies the presence of its substance ether and the presence of the tactile quality of the sensation of heat implies the presence of its substance air. Similarly we apprehend solid and liquid objects primarily through their colour, the qualities of smell and taste go with it. It must be remembered that energy, solidity and liquidity are the triple constituents of all objects. It is only on the presentation of a physical body that one can have sensations of smell, touch, taste or sound, but the body itself has to be apprehended through the sensation of colour. Therefore colour is the primary sense datum—other sensations come in its train. Colour can be reduced to its causes, the three primordial principles, which in their turn are successive effects of the First Principle '*Sat*'. It is the Ultimate Reality. Therefore do I say that the Knowledge of this Principle will leave nothing unknown.

In the days of yore, there were races of wise and prosperous people who solved the riddle of the Universe, through the essential Knowledge that the only sense data are the three primeval colours representing the three primordial structures assumed by 'Sat', the Principle of Ultimate Reality. That enlightened civilization is now extinct.

Śwetaketu : But how did Life appear, sir, from these three inanimate principles—how are their symbols to be apprehended in living organisms ?

Aaruni : Everything, Life or non-Life, organic or inorganic matter, is the amalgam of these three principles. In certain objects this is obvious, while in others it has to be seen through. Because of a complexity of organization in living objects, the unravelling of the mystery would need concentration and clairvoyance.

Śwetaketu : Are human bodies also similarly constituted father?

Aaruni : I am coming to that. A human body is a particular material structure with a number of limbs and sense organs. It has the highest organizational complex. But even so, the synthesis of the three primordial principles is its basis.

Intake of solid food is followed by a process of internal combustion by the digestive system, the fire in the stomach. The coarse product is ejected as faeces. The thinner matter is converted into muscles and flesh. The lightest residue infiltrates into the fine nervous system and becomes mind, directing the senses and the limbs. Please note carefully that mind is transformed matter, the end result of its organizational complex, and not something immaterial, partless or permanent as held by the Vaiśeṣika School. It is a result of metabolism. It is also a sense organ. The only difference between the external sense organs and the internal sense organ viz., mind is, that it can apprehend the subtle, the distant, the fine and the beautiful and has comparatively a greater duration than the other senses. That is why it is sometimes said that the Mind is the radiant eye of the body, but that does not mean that it is a spiritual entity. The Spirit is One and without a Second.

Similarly water, when drunk, goes through this metabolic process. The coarse part is ejected as urine, the finer part flows through the arteries and is transformed into blood and the finest part is converted into the prāna. That is why it is said 'water is Life, without it, Life dissipates'.

Certain nutrients are constituted of energy (fire), like butter, oil, etc. (proteins). The metabolic process in the case of this type of food is as follows. The coarse product is transformed into bones, the medium product into marrow, and the fine product infiltrates into the larynx and generates the vocal power. Fats facilitate fluency of speech.

The constituent of mind is solid food. Vitality and voice are made of water and energy food respectively.

Śwetaketu : Some species of rodents live on solid food, yet they have life and voice, the sharks and fish live in water yet they have mind and voice, while certain species only live on fats and yet have life and mind. So how can one of these principles be the material cause of the phenomena of Life, Mind and Voice?

Aaruni : They are not so singly. The causal character of these principles is derived from their synthesis. The entire physical world, from slime to man, is constituted of the assembly of the three principles energy, water and earth. The preponderance of one of these principles in a particular object determines its nature and appellation. Thus solid food has in it liquidity and energy, liquid food has solidity and energy and energy food has liquidity and solidity. This solves your problem.

Śwetaketu : I find it difficult to comprehend. The human body is constituted of the compound of fire, water and earth, a distinctly gross and material object. Yet the mutations of these gross principles go to make Mind, Life and Voice, which are subtle. How is this possible without a variation in kind? How can there be any difference in kind between a cause and its effects? Kindly explain further, sir, with appropriate illustrations.

Aaruni : Listen. When you churn curd, the lighter portion goes up on top and becomes butter. Similarly the food consumed is churned up by the digestive system, with the help of air and the subtlest and lightest portion goes up through the nervous system and forms mind, the lightest and subtlest portion of water becomes Life, the respiratory system, the lightest and subtlest portion of energy foods become vocal power. So mind is made of solid matter, life of water and voice of energy.

(*To be continued*)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Swami Nikhilananda is the Head of the Ramakrishna Vivekananda Center, New York and is well-known as the translator of the Bengali book, *Kathamrita,* into English, the *Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna.* He has also written biographies of the Holy Mother and Swamiji besides the translations of the Upanişads etc. A disciple of the Holy Mother, he briefly sketches here in the article 'Holy Mother and Her Disciples', her life and teachings.

Dr Viswanath Prasad Varma is Director, Institute of Public Administration, Patna University. An author and prolific writer, Dr Varma in his article, 'The Philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita', forcefully brings out its universal message and its synthesis of Samkhya and Vedanta as also its message of Karma Yoga.

Swami Budhananda, a former Editor of the *Vendanta Kesari,* is now Assistant Minister at the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York. His article 'Jesus Christ and Vedanta' shows how the precepts of all Teachers are essentially non-different.

'Bagala in the guise of Sarasvati' by Sri M. P. Pandit, Sri Aurobindo Ashrama, Pondicherry, is a review article of the book, *Holy Mother* by Swami Nikhilananda. Sri Pandit is a linguist and a literateur and is well-known to our readers.

'Swami Vivekananda and Indian Culture' by Swami Premeshananda is the third instalment of the series.

'The Great Equation' by Sri S. K. Gupta, Calcutta, is the fourth instalment of the series.

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM OTHER COUNTRIES

It is increasingly felt by all conscientious people that the days of factions and fights and quarrels and wars must be ended. The leaders of the different nations of the world, except those who will not see the writing on the wall but arrogantly assume powers for themselves to dally with the destiny of millions of people, are intensely thinking of devising ways and means to avoid conflict, to live in amity. The test of one such endeavour has been the nuclear test ban treaty, which we had already commented upon in a previous issue in these pages. Though this treaty is a negative approach to the problem of eliminating war, as far as it goes, it has a tremendous value.

But the negative move alone is not enough to bring nations professing different ideologies together. There should be a positive approach too. Such a move is possible only when mutual trust and sympathy grows between nations. It is a known fact that mistrust exists between the two types of ideologies that are prominently prevalent in the world today. But we have to begin somewhere. The ball must be set rolling. For this, it will be good if it is remembered that it is not feasible to have one type of ideology for the whole world. The sooner it is realized the better. This was tried in the case of religion in the past — one world, one religion — the result has been crusades and massacres, without the end being achieved, nor even in sight. As long as the world exists there is bound to be variety and as long as variety remains, different ideologies also will remain. Wisdom lies not in trying to eliminate the different ideologies but placing them before the world for judgement, rooting out evils that exist in each of them and living amicably with all of them.

India today must keep open her mind and try to receive as much help as possible, not in dollars and sterlings, but from the benefit other nations are deriving by co-operating with each other. Here for instance is a report of what Soviet Russia is doing to join hands with other countries in solving the problem of electric power :

> 'The power systems of Poland, G.D.R., Czechoslovakia, Hungary and western Ukraine have already been linked to a central control headquarters in Prague.
>
> Bulgaria and Rumania will soon be linked to the system by a high voltage line which is under construction.'*

This huge power grid will link seven socialist countries. May be they are all of the same ideology, but this should be an eye-opener to India. We, too, at the present have a common ideology as we profess to belong to a single nation. Here is a lesson in co-operation. But what were we doing in India till recently, till the emergency due to Chinese invasion was declared? Quarrelling over river waters, fighting over the adjustment of borders between one State and another, all of the same nation. Who benefited by these quarrels? Are we not wasting our energy about these things for nothing? Why should there be waste of the tax-payers' money over border commissions and the like inside a nation? Could not this same wealth be returned to the tax-payer in a better manner? Cannot two States of the same country, the Indian Union, pool their resources and do some good for people on both the sides? How does the common man benefit by all these squabbles? While we do not advocate the centralization of power, we say that decentralization should not mean non-co-operation between the member States.

The nation should pull together as a chariot. Every member of it is important — the wheels, the axle, the superstructure, aye, even the peg that retains the wheel in its position. However, let not anyone carry this simile too far to give a tortuous meaning to what all we have said. No particular part of the country is referred to here as wheel or superstructures. Every State is a wheel, every State is a superstructure. Yet another instance we may cite, that of man's own body. Which part of it can be dismembered without distorting its comeliness and reducing its usefulness? So it is with the nation, every strata of society is important. Every part should co-operate to see that the ship of the nation does not flounder on the rocks of these quarrels and to see also that poverty and squalor are wiped out from the country.

People in power should without any hesitation or standing on false prestige, try to solve all problems that sow seeds of disruption and mistrust between one State and another. And for all this we should shed jealousy, which, Swamiji repeatedly pointed out, is the bane of our nation. Let us hope wiser counsel will prevail and that the nation will grow into an integral whole.

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* Reported in the *Soviet Weekly*, September 26, 1963. Published from 3, Rosary Gardens, London, S.W. 7.

NEWS THAT SHOCKS THE WORLD

As we go to the press comes this shocking news of President John F. Kennedy, of the United States of America, being shot dead in Dallas, a town in Texas. The dastardly act takes from our midst a noble personality who strived for peace on all fronts. His fight in the cause of civil rights for all American citizens will be remembered by America and the world for ever. Posterity will understand him better. His balanced judgment and courage in the international crises had solved, during his short term as President, many a complex problem and had earned for him the repute as a great statesman. He had a deep appreciation of the problems of India. It was his prompt action in helping our country at the time of the Chinese invasion which was one of the chief causes that made the aggressor think and retrace his steps at least a little. It is indeed, unfortunate that such a noble life with potentiality for much good should have been cut so short and so young in a most inhuman way when the world, still suffering from political prejudices, needed his services most. The world has become much poorer in his death. We place on record our profound sorrow at this great loss and convey our deep sympathy for the American nation.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

PRESUPPOSITIONS OF INDIA'S PHILOSOPHIES: By K. H. Potter. Prentice-Hall Philosophy Series; Prentice-Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. Pages 276 + xi. Price, not stated.

"Old wine in new bottles," is not probably a correct description of this work for while Mr Potter discusses the relevant topics of Indian Philosophy in an impartial manner, he has arranged them in a new way discarding the traditional six systems. He has also given a new terminology indicative of the central doctrines. The book is equally interesting for its home-truths and its candid appraisal of the Indian philosophers of the present century.

Mr Potter starts by taking the concept of freedom as the basic assumption of Hinduism. The goal of Indian Philosophy is "to discover a conceptual scheme or map in which we can find a route to complete freedom from wherever we are now." Freedom-from is the problem of causation while freedom-to is that of attaining freedom or realization. Causality is not fatalism nor is it without set patterns. "Progress philosophies" are those which are convinced that self-knowledge is progressively possible by understanding, action or devotion. Contrary to this is the "leap philosophy," which asserts that full freedom is possible only by a sudden leap of the insight. The causal laws result in a limitation in our experience and this produces in us tension which the author defines as a disparity between capacities and performance.. This is a challenge which is felt as tension in a situation.

With this as his basis, the author discusses the fundamental concepts. He starts from a discussion of the "attitudes"—dharma, artha, kama and moksha, and examines the necessary conditions of freedom. With a felicity born of understanding, he coins new terms and phrases like "path-philosophy", "leap-philosophy", "left-hand, right-hand, centre theories", etc. His discussion of such topics as *samavaya*, similarity, relations, *parinama vada* and the *vivarta vada* is very careful. The concepts of negation and error are investigated in detail.

While we may not agree with all that Mr Potter says in his conclusion, nevertheless we have to agree that his criticism of the Indian philosophers of the present century is relevant and timely. He argues that a Western orientation has seeped into our philosophy to such an extent that we are frankly apologetic in our treatment of classical philosophy which we relegate to the mere history of philosophy without realizing its relevancy to our human predicament and longing which are eternally the same. He is also of opinion that under the stress and strain of modern conditions, we adopt a tolerance among paths and disciplines and use only such arguments that are useful in subserving social ends. Having lost our hold on our past we do not feel at home in the Western present. The result is that we are defensive about both sides of the coin. Dr Potter's statement that very few practising philosophers in India nowadays know the details of the classical system and do not see their relevancy to living problems may be unpalatable but it seems to be substantially correct. Mr Potter has done a good service in his frank criticism of the present century Indian philosopher.

Though rather a difficult reading, the book is eminently worth a detailed study and gives us a picture of how our philosophy appears to the Westerner. The book should be read by every student of Indian philosophy.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI.

PHILOSOPHY OF GORAKHNATH: By Akshaya Kumar Banerjea. Pub. Mahant Digvijay Nath Trust. Gorakhnath Temple, Gorakhpur. Pp. 343. Price Rs. 12.

This is the first authoritative and exhaustive treatise to appear in English on the Natha System of Philosophy and the author could be none other than Prof. A. K. Banerjea whose fascinating writings on the subject have been hitherto scattered here and there in the form of prefaces and introductions to the various tracts of varying worth that have been published during the last two decades. As expected, Prof. Banerjea rises to superb heights in his independent exposition of the Philosophy basing this ancient *sampradaya*. He leaves no point untouched, no problem unsolved.

The origins of the Natha tradition are lost in legend but Gorakhnath is regarded as the real founder of this System and all the major works on the subject are derived from the *Siddha-siddhanta-paddhati*, a remarkable treatise in Sanskrit ascribed to the celebrated teacher. The author of this work presents the philosophy and the yoga expounded in the *Paddhati* in our modern terms, relating them to subsequent developments in the spiritual thought of India. The main topics that are systematically developed are: Conception of the Ultimate Reality, Saccidananda Brahma, Para Samvit and its Unique Power, Siva and Sakti in eternal union, Gradual unfoldment of Sakti; Self-manifestation of Siva as Cosmic Purusha; Evolution of the Cosmic body of Siva; System of worlds in the Cosmic Body; Individual bodies in the Cosmic Bodies; Constitution of the Individual body; Esoteric aspects of the Body; Cosmos in the Individual body; Individual Souls; and the Supreme Ideal of life. The author has added two long chapters on the evolution of Hindu spiritual Culture giving a bird's eye-view of the development of the various philosophical and spiritual schools in India, in order to help the reader to fully appreciate the contribution of the Natha school of Thought and Practice towards a reconciliation of the different warring systems in the field.

Gorakhnath regards the Universe as a manifestation of the Supreme Consciousness — Adi Siva — through the play of his own, *nija*, Sakti, for the Delight of bringing out from his own Being the infinite potentials held within. The world in which we live is the last step of a graded deployment of that Consciousness-Power whose two terms are the *universal* and the *individual*. Siva and Sakti are present in each form of their creation and at some level they derive the ananda of manifestation in that form. Each individual has to awaken to this truth and adopt the prescribed means of yoga and knowledge to make it real in his own active consciousness. The way proceeds through a harmonization of the various elements in one's own being, *samarasa*, and equally through a consequent harmonization with the corresponding universal organization. When both the systems find their harmony, there is a spontaneous movement of fulfilment in the transcendent Unity, the final *samarasa* in which all diversities converge into the Ineffable.

Chapters on the constitution of the human body in its physiological and the spiritual aspects, the position and working of the different Chakras, Adharas, Lakshyas, and Vyomans are very instructive. The author draws attention to the varying number of the Chakras and their locations according to the experts in Natha Yoga.

A short selection of verses from the works of Gorakhnath and a glossary of the philosophical terms used in the treatise are usefully appended to the volume.

This is a masterly work for which all students of Indian Philosophy and Cultural tradition will be ever grateful to the author.

M. P. PANDIT.

AT HOLY MOTHER'S FEET: By Her direct disciples. Pub. Advaita Ashrama, Mayavati, Almora, Himalayas. Pages 383. Price Rs. 5.

One day the mother of Saradamani — consort of Sri Ramakrishna — complained that due to her marriage with an insane man Sarada could never hope to hear the soothing word 'mother'. At this, 'Sri Ramakrishna reassured her with the promise that her daughter would have so many children that her ears would ache, as it were, by constantly hearing the word "mother".' (P. 14) And it came to pass in a resounding manner. For after the passing away of the Master, Saradadevi came into her own as a spiritual mother to all the disciples and devotees of Sri Ramakrishna who reached his help and grace through her. Many came to her for solace, for guidance, for initiation. The present book containing personal accounts of the Holy Mother Sri Saradadevi from five of her direct disciples, viz: Swami Arupananda, Sarayubala, Bharatiprana, Swami Ishanananda and 'A devotee', gives a graphic and at the same time a very informative narration of her spiritual ministrations. What strikes the reader most is the continual direction she used to receive from Sri Ramakrishna in her day-to-day dealings with men and things.

M. P. PANDIT.

JNANA-VIJNANA OF SRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA: By Magdal Ramachandra, 121, Gitashram, 6th Cross, Bangalore-18. P. 63. Price Rs. 2.25.

Coming from the author of *Buddhi Yoga* of the Gita and *Shashvata Dharma* in the Gita, the present dissertation on *Jnana* and *Vijnana* forms so to say the culmination of his life-long study of the scripture. As the author rightly says, the Gita may use many terms common in the Vedantic terminology but the significance it gives to those terms is its own. If one misses that, then true meaning is lost. Sri M. Ramachandra develops in these pages the standards of reference which are to be borne in mind while studying any topic in the Gita.

There are certain fundamental principles in Creation which have woven themselves in Laws that are active in the several orders of existence. Their knowledge, in so far as it pertains to realms above the field of buddhi, is Vijnana, knowledge spiritual. Knowledge of the mind, perception of the senses according to right norms is Jnana, knowledge intellectual. The Gita expounds both of these kinds of Knowledge. The author of this book approaches the subject under the following heads: Atma, the Ultimate Principle, Purushottama the Supreme Person at the head of Creation, Brahma the architect and sustainer of the Universe, the Jiva and the several constituents of his evolution. An interesting chart has been appended to the book embodying the conclusions.

A useful addition to Gita literature.

M. P. PANDIT.

GIFT OF GOD: By M. K. Gandhi. Compiled by U. R. Rao. Pub. Navajivan Publishing House, Ahmedabad-14. Pp. 32. Price 40 nP.

Gandhiji has always regarded the first verse of Isavasyopanishad as the quintessence of Hindu religion; and his own scheme for political and moral regeneration proceeded on the realization that "no man or woman is entitled to the possession of wealth unless he or she has given a fair share of it to the poor or the helpless". This booklet sets out many incidents wherein he had both preached and practised that ideal.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

CORRECT THINKING & STANDARD IDEOLOGY: By L. N. Bhatt. Published at 14/A, 186, W. E. A., Karol Bhagh, New Delhi-5. Pp. 144. Price Rs. 5.

The author pleads in this book for the ideal of plain living and high thinking, even if that would mean the wholesale transportation of the urban folk to the villages (P. 54 & P. 55). The chapter on "Religion, its practice and results" is well conceived, and deserves deep study and cogitation.

S. Rajagopalan.

THE PRESIDENT UNDER THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION: By K. M. Munshi. Pub. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chowpatty, Bombay-7. Pp. 54. Price Re. 1.50.

Shri K. M. Munshi has in this booklet subjected the provisions of the Indian Constitution to a close and critical examination to arrive at his thesis that the President is not a figure head but is clothed with powers to influence the Cabinet, his functions being not only executive, but also legislative, judicial and prerogative.

S. Rajagopalan.

ANNUALS

The Government College Miscellany, Mangalore, South Kanara: Swami Vivekananda Centenary Number.

Perhaps, this is the first college outside the institutions of the Ramakrishna Mission to celebrate the centenary of Swami Vivekananda as long back as January 18 of 1963. It is gratifying also to note that some of the students and professors of the college have read the life and teachings of Swamiji and contributed articles to the miscellany in English and Hindi and a poem in Sanskrit. Let us hope that the other students of the college may have read those articles and have their interest kindled to know more about Swami Vivekananda. The Principal of the College, Shri R. R. Umarji, who is also the Editor of the Miscellany deserves congratulations for bringing out this Vivekananda Centenary Number and having set an example for other colleges.

TELUGU

ANANTAVISVAHRIDAYAM: Published by Sri Bhagavad Gita Mandiram, Punadipad, Krishna Dist. Pp. 600. Price Rs. 10.00.

The author does not give out his real name, but calls himself 'Visvagarbha Gaganam'. Born, with a spiritual bent of mind, on 2-10-1913, he became the adopted son of a wealthy maternal aunt. In spite of a brilliant academic career, he lived always immersed in enjoying the recorded nectarine messages of all the Incarnations of all times and climes. With many of the contemporary spiritual luminaries, such as Bhagavan Ramana, Sri Aurobindo to mention only a few, he was in constant correspondence. The faithful presentation, herein, of all his correspondence and notes etc., in a language free from all discipline makes an interesting reading. The price is moderate.

N. Bhaktavatsalam.

NEWS AND REPORTS

THE VEDANTA SOCIETY OF ST. LOUIS

Report for April, 1962 to March, 1963

Swami Satprakashananda, who is the Swami-in-charge, spoke on different religious and philosophical topics in the Society's chapel on Sunday mornings. The services were open to all. Total number of services was 45. On Tuesday evening the Swami conducted meditation and expounded the Bhagavad-Gita. Members and students of different religious and educational centers also attended the meetings. Total number of Tuesday meetings was 42. Meditation was also conducted on special occasions. The chapel was open for silent meditation on all week days from 11 to 12 noon.

(1) On Good Friday the Swami conducted a meditation class and gave a talk on 'The Resurrection'. (2) A special service was conducted on Christmas Eve. The Swami spoke on 'The Hindu View of Christ'. An additional meeting was also held for the senior students of the Far Eastern Culture class of John Burroughs School, Ladue, Mo. They came with their teacher and listened to the Swami's recorded lecture on 'The Hindu View of Life'. The Swami met them after the lecture and answered their written questions.

On the birth anniversaries of Sri Krishna, Buddha, Shankara, Sri Ramakrishna, the Holy Mother, Swami Vivekananda, and Swami Brahmananda, devotional worship was performed in the shrine and special services were conducted in the chapel.

During the summer recess the Swami stayed at Los Angeles with Swami Prabhavananda in South Laguna till the end of August. On two Sundays he was the guest speaker at the Vedanta Temples of Los Angeles and Santa Barbara. His topic was 'The Last Message of Sri Krishna'.

Swamis Nityaswarupananda and Budhananda came to St. Louis on May 22 and October 22 respectively and stayed for some days. The Society had the privilege of receiving about thirty guests and visitors from different places in the U. S. and abroad. They generally interviewed the Swami and attended the services. Some came with the special purpose of seeing him.

The Swami gave about eighty interviews for spiritual guidance and for the solution of the seekers' personal problems. The library at the

Center was well utilized by its members and friends.

On his way back from Los Angeles Swami Satprakashananda stopped in Kansas City for a couple of days. He addressed a special meeting in a devotee's home and answered many questions from the audience. He also gave a number of interviews. The Vedanta Library in Kansas City was well utilized.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

AT SRI RAMESWARAM TEMPLE

Swami Vivekananda visited this famous temple twice, once as an itinerant monk, unknown, footsore and weary in 1892 and again in the year 1897 (on 27th January). He came this time as the guest of the Raja of Ramnad, the late Bhaskara Sethupathy and stayed in a temple guest house known as 'Ramamandira'. On this visit Swamiji had addressed a gathering at the Temple. To commemorate this event, the temple authorities celebrated the centenary of Swamiji on September 28, '63. The special features of the programme were: (1) Special worship in the Temple to Sri Ramanathaswamy; (2) worship of Sri Ramakrishna by the Swamis of the Order in a specially erected pandal; (3) unveiling by Dr S. Radhakrishnan, President of India, tablets with inscriptions from Swamiji's address at the temple (in English as well as in Tamil translation) and facsimile of Swamiji's remarks on the temple visitors' book; (The tablets were placed on the spot from which Swamiji had spoken.) (4) a meeting which was presided over by Dr S. Radhakrishnan; (5) release of Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Souvenir by Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam, the present Chief Minister of Madras; and (6) feeding of the Daridranarayanas. (7) An exhibition of Swamiji's photos and excerpts from his teachings was also arranged in the temple precincts by Sri Mantram of Sri Ramakrishna Mission High School, Madras. (8) A film show on the life of Sri Ramakrishna was screened by Swami Sarvajnananda.

Sri R. Shanmuga Rajeswara Sethupathy, Chairman of the Trustees of the Temple and a descendent from the line of Sri Bhaskara Sethupathy took a keen interest to organize and make the celebrations a success. Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam and Swami Sarvajnananda addressed the meeting. Sri Bishnuram Medhi, Governor of Madras was amongst some of the important personages present on the occasion.

Holy Mother's birthday thithipuja falls on Saturday the 7th December, 1963.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS, MADRAS

An Appeal for Contribution

Everyone knows that the inauguration of the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda, the great patriot saint of India, took place with all solemnity in January, 1963. Since then celebrations have been going on not only in different parts of India but outside of India as well.

Madras being very closely associated with Swami Vivekananda, it has been decided to celebrate the main centenary celebrations here on a grand scale befitting its noble traditions.

The Centenary Committee under the patronage of Dr S. Radhakrishnan, President of India and under the chairmanship of Dr C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar have formulated an ambitious scheme to commemorate the memory of the great Swamiji. It will cost about rupees ten lakhs to work out the entire scheme. Some items of the scheme such as a Girls' High School, installation of a statute of Swami Vivekananda, a well-equipped Library, Reading Room, Children's Corner and Auditorium, publication of the Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda in Tamil and Telugu, are of permanent nature which will render public utility services for many many years to come.

The Governments of India, Madras and Andhra Pradesh and some friends have very kindly paid liberal contributions which have enabled us almost to complete the major schemes but we shall still require about two lakhs of rupees to complete all the items and to hold the celebrations in a fitting manner.

We therefore appeal to all devotees and admirers of Swami Vivekananda to kindly contribute liberally and feel proud of being responsible for upholding the cause of service to humanity as envisaged by Swami Vivekananda.

Contributions which are free from Income Tax, may kindly be remitted to Ramakrishna Mission, Swami Vivekananda Centenary, C/o. Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras-4 (India).

The Centenary Celebrations will start on the 10th January, 1964 and will continue till the 26th. Srimat Swami Madhavanandaji, President, Sri Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Dr S. Radhakrishnan and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru are expected to attend the functions. Detailed programme will be published in the January issue.

SWAMI SUDDHASATWANANDA,
Secretary,
Swami Vivekananda Centenary Celebration
Committee, Madras.

Date: 1-12-1963.

. . . . *Be bold and face*
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

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PANCADAŚĪ

बुद्धिकर्मेन्द्रियप्राणपञ्चकैर्मनसा धिया । शरीरं सप्तदशभिस्सूक्ष्मं तल्लिङ्गमुच्यते ॥ २३ ॥

Buddhi karmendriya, with the five organs of knowledge and the five organs of action; *prāna pancakaiḥ,* with the five pranas; *manasā,* with the mind; *dhiyā,* with the intellect; (*yuktam,* made of); *saptadaśabhiḥ,* with seventeen (parts); *sūkṣmam,* subtle; *śarīram,* body; *tat,* that; *lingamucyate,* is called *Linga śarīra* (subtle body).

23. The subtle body which is made of seventeen parts such as the five jnanendriyas (organs of knowledge), the five karmendriyas (organs of action), the five pranas, the mind and intellect is called the Linga *śarīra.**

* The Linga *śarīra* or subtle body is what transmigrates.

प्राज्ञस्तत्राभिमानेन तैजसत्वं प्रपद्यते । हिरण्यगर्भतामीशस्तयोर्व्यष्टिसमष्टिता ॥ २४ ॥

Prājnah, the jiva, which is in conjunction with the limiting adjunct of ignorance; *tatra,* in the subtle body; *abhimānena,* identifying with; *taijasatvam,* name taijasa; *prapadyate,* obtains; *Īśaḥ,* the Lord, who is in conjunction with maya; (identifying with the subtle body obtains); *hiranyagarbhatām,* the name Hiranyagarbha. *Tayoḥ,* between them; *bhedaḥ,* difference; *vyaṣṭi,* the state of individuality; *samaṣṭitā,* the state of totality.

24. Prājna[1] by its identification with the subtle body[2] comes to be named as Taijasa and Īśwara[3] coming to identify Himself with the subtle body obtains the name of Hiranyagarbha. The difference between the two, however, is that of individuality and totality.[4]

[1] Prajna is jīva in conjunction with nescience which is predominantly of impure sattwa.

[2] Subtle body referred to in the previous verse.

[3] Īśwara, is Brahman in conjunction with *māyā* which is of predominantly pure sattwa.

[4] The sum total of all jīvas is called Hiranyagarbha, in a way similar to that of a collection of trees is called a forest.

SWAMI BRAHMANANDA — THE SPIRITUAL SON OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

I

Every enterprise requires two distinctive forces to keep it in a palpable, healthy and dynamic condition — one to help it expand and the other to aid it in consolidation. Both these forces are imperative. For without depth expansion tends towards infirmity, and without expansion depth becomes meaningless. This is more poignantly felt in the case of an enterprise which seeks to serve the spiritual needs of mankind as a whole. That is what happened to Hinduism, the Eternal Religion, when it made foreign travel a taboo. The exchange of ideas ceased; the firmament of religion shrank, as it were, to such small dimensions that it was thought to be contained in the mere observance of certain external practices.

In the movement ushered in by Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda played the dynamic part of spreading the message of the Master broadcast. He trotted the earth almost from end to end in order to do this. But the life given to him was very short, a bare 39 years, out of which his actual work can be said to begin only after 1886. If we remember the days of the Baranagore monastery we find Swami Vivekananda not as the dynamic interlocutor but as the consolidator. For after the passing away of the Master the young disciples had gone back to their homes and it was left to Swami Vivekananda to gather them back, instil the Master's fiery renunciation into them and pick up the thread from where the Master had left to ensconce the brotherhood on a firm footing. And once it was done, the Master called him, as it were, to function as the other arm, that of taking the message of the Eternal Religion to different parts of the world. For a time it appears, on the surface, that Swami Vivekananda had ceased to consolidate but even this appearance is for a brief span of time. Even from America he was urging his *gurubhais* and disciples to get a plot of land and to build a monastery, from where future preachers of Vedanta could spring up.

But his life, as we have said, was too brief and he had so much to do in making the world know about the Master's message. He, therefore, stuck to it and submitted to the commands from on High. Nevertheless he saw his approaching end. To whom should he entrust the Master's treasure — the sacred task of guiding the movement? The Master himself had solved this problem for Narendranath in the Dakshineswar days. Once Sri Ramakrishna had remarked, 'Rakhal has in him the capacity to rule a kingdom.' Narendranath who was present on the occasion took the hint. He told the younger group of the Master's disciples about the Master's appreciation and said, 'From today we shall call Rakhal, Raja', and that epithet stuck on. Sri Ramakrishna who heard about it later, was greatly pleased. Remembering the Master's words Swamiji from the very beginning left him in charge of the Math and formally made over to Rakhal, Swami Brahmananda, the Presidentship of the organization in 1901. For full twenty-one years he guided the faltering foot-steps of the young organization unostentatiously, yet commanding the respect, awe and love of one and all with whomsoever he came in contact.

After the going forth of the message of Sri Ramakrishna into the world, it was required that preachers fit to take up the mantle were to be recruited and trained, not for a few years but for generations to come. It was a work which required infinite patience. It was the task of consolidation of what was already gained. And this task devolved on the shoulders of Swami Brahmananda, and before two years had elapsed he lost his companion, Swami Vivekananda.

II

It is difficult to assess the personality of the spiritually great ones. It is more so when the person happens to be of a silent disposition. So, to get a peep into the personality of Swami Brahmananda we have to take recourse to Sri Ramakrishna. The Master has left to us, through his talks, his insight into the exalted characteristics of his disciples, their inherent natures and their unapproachable heights of renunciation. 'Once, before Rakhal came,' says Sri Ramakrishna, 'I saw in a vision that the Divine Mother suddenly brought a boy, and placing him on my lap said, "He is your son". I was startled to hear it. I said, "What is that? How can I have a son?" She smiled and explained, "He is not a son in the ordinary worldly sense of the term, but your all-renouncing spiritual son." Thus assured, I was consoled. Rakhal came sometime after I had that vision and I recognized him at once as the boy.' Another time Sri Ramakrishna stated how Rakhal's nature was revealed to him: 'One day just before Rakhal came here I saw in a trance Krishna, as the shepherd boy of Vrindavana, standing on a full-blown lotus in the midst of a lake and by his side stood a boy looking at Him playfully. When Rakhal came, I knew him as that boy, as Krishna's companion.' Rakhal was therefore not only the companion of the Master in this Incarnation but in the past as well. The Incarnations come with such pure souls to help them in their divine mission.

Again, Sri Ramakrishna used to class him as an Īśwarakoti — one possessed of divine qualities, perfect from his very birth—and also as one of the inner circle (*antaranga*). 'Youngsters like him belong to the class of the ever-perfect. They are born with God-consciousness. No sooner do they grow a little older than they realize the danger of coming in contact with the world.... Their one thought is how to realize God,' said the Master many a time. These words of the Master are very significant. For Sri Ramakrishna did not heap any undue praise on anyone for whatsoever a reason. He was simple as a child and whatever was revealed to his insight he spoke without reservation. Moreover, he depended on the Divine Mother for everything, even to bring to him versatile spiritual geniuses, which the Mother had said would come to him. He prayed to Her and cried in anguish at the delay in their coming but there he rested. All his appeals were to the Divine Mother and he was sure that She would not fail him. She did not let him down at any time. That is the reason why his estimation is infallible, his every word inestimable.

Now, the relation between Sri Ramakrishna and Rakhal was sweet, intimate and very touching. His attitude towards this disciple was like that of a mother to her child. Rakhal too in his presence was just like a child of five or six, wholly dependent on him and basking as it were, under his protecting wings.

Such had been the personality of Swami Brahmananda even at the beginning of his spiritual career. It deepened and expanded with the passage of time. For the first few years after the passing away of Sri Ramakrishna he spent his time exclusively in tapasya at Puri, Banaras, Vrindavan, and on the banks of the Narmadā. Knowing his indrawn nature and complete reticence to pay heed to the wants of the body Swamiji enjoined one of his brother disciples to accompany him and look after his needs. Swami Subodhananda, another direct disciple of the Master, who lived with him at Vrindavan used to bring him food and set it down in an appointed place, but many days it would remain untouched, for Maharaj, as Rakhal was lovingly called, would be lost to the outer world, in the contemplation of the divine.

At Banaras when he was offered help in the way of arrangement for his food as long as he stayed there, he politely but firmly declined the offer and preferred to live on the food begged from the alms-houses. For it entailed no obligation on him. Besides, it left him free from disturbance by way of people crowding in. This was the time when he desired to be left alone. From Banaras he proceeded to the banks of the Narmada. It is said that here, once, for six days at a stretch he had no consciousness of the outer world at all. So deep was his samadhi. But what divine experiences and visions he had during these times were never known. They remained a sealed book for ever as he never talked about them. Once, however, he remarked, 'The religious life begins after Nirvikalpa samadhi'. But how few can understand it! Till one attains that state one sees everything in a different way, one's evaluation of things gets coloured by one's own nature. The ideal is very high and hence appears impossible. But persons like him who have attained the goal have affirmed it. Swamiji too said, 'Religion is realization'. Until then we are all groping in the dark.

III

Swami Brahmananda's contribution to the world is enormous but the brightest part of it is his life — austerely undertaken, unostentatiously but immaculately lived and above all purely dependent upon God. It is an absorbing study to follow his footsteps as a pilgrim from Banaras to Narmada, from thence to Panchavati, Dwaraka, and other places. His absolute dependence on God and stern abidance by the rule of non-acceptance of money is a thing that fills one with awe and more so in a world where everything seems to go topsy turvy in the absence of that one thing — money. His dependence on God was pure and simple, almost child-like. At Bombay a devotee of Sri Ramakrishna pressed him to accept his hospitality but he refused on the ground that it would interfere with his solitude and flag away his dependence on God. He put up in a quiet place near Mumbadevi's temple and lived on alms. Even for travel he would not accept money. Many places he covered on foot despite the untold difficulties.

During this time, in Vrindavan, he came across Vijay Krishna Goswami whom he knew at Dakshineswar. Both were glad at the meeting. The Goswamiji, who had come to know of the austere life being led by Swami Brahmananda, asked him: 'Sir, why are you engaged in such austere practices when Sri Ramakrishna had already bestowed on you all types of experiences and visions?' In a sweet voice, the Swami replied, 'What I have experienced by his grace I am trying to make my own.' The Goswami was wonderstruck. He felt the surge of the God-hunger that was passing through the Swami and thought it futile to try to dissuade him from his pursuit. From Vrindavan he went to Hardwar to continue his life of contemplation. Thus it was a saga of intense sadhana for a long period until, perhaps, he received some command from Sri Ramakrishna to return to the field of work. For just when he was passing his days blissfully at Vrindavan he suddenly left for Calcutta. After a few days of his arrival there he said to some of his brother disciples: 'I was blissful at Vrindavan. But I came here so that I may be of service to the brothers at the Math to help them express in their lives that love and devotion which we found in Sri Ramakrishna, so that people who would come in contact with them may be reminded of him.' Further he added, 'People will come to you, will come to the Math seeking solace. They will take shelter at Sri Ramakrishna's feet and attain peace from the miseries of this world.'

It must be remembered, however, that we cannot expect always something spectacular to happen in the life of a man of the spirit. The contribution of these spiritual ones go, more often than not, unnoticed. For their influence like the morning dew that brings into blossom myriads of flowers is silently but unobtrusively exerted. It cannot be measured in terms of worldly things. A single moment's contact with them, a single word of theirs changes some men, gives others supreme consolation. It is unwise, therefore, to judge these great ones from mere outward accomplishments. People competent to know about them are those who have attained similar spiritual heights. In this connection it would be profitable to know what Swamiji once said of him : 'Raja is the greatest treasure house of spirituality.' On another occasion when a European devotee came to Swamiji with his spiritual problems Swamiji sent him to Swami Brahmananda with the words : 'There is a dynamo working and we are all under him.' The devotee after conversing with Swami Brahmananda felt his doubts cleared and expressed gratitude for the help. Such was his personality.

The tree is known by its fruits. But seldom is it known how the seed grew from its tiny, inconspicuous beginning into the tree. The Ramakrishna Order has today expanded into a fairly big institution and has immense possibilities of further growth in it. But it was Maharaj who sowed the seed, watered and manured it with all motherly care in order that it may shoot up into a mighty banyan tree, so that the message of Sri Ramakrishna could reach and minister to the spiritual as also the secular needs of humanity for ever. Maharaj, it is needless to say, firmly believed like Swamiji that humanity needed the message of Sri Ramakrishna particularly at the present moment of its evolution. So in order to put the organization on a firm footing, Maharaj, who was far-sighted in administration, picked and chose the right type of human instruments, monks and lay devotees, for particular fields of work both in India and abroad. That is why the success the disciples, lay or monastic, achieved everywhere was almost phenomenal.

IV

From the time Swami Brahmananda, who came to be known to the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna as 'Maharaj', arrived at Calcutta, after his long pilgrimage, a different phase opened in his life — that of ministering to the spiritual needs of the people. Sri Ramakrishna's name had by then spread far and wide and many earnest seekers, young and old, now thirsted to drink of the ambrosia of his message. But Sri Ramakrishna was not living in his physical tenement any longer. People had also heard a great deal about Maharaj ; how he was the beloved of the Master and so on ; so they, from all walks of life, young and old, students and the employed came to him whenever he stayed in Calcutta. The ease with which he moved with them made them shed the awe, that otherwise naturally awakened in them on seeing him, and find in him a person almost of their own age. They felt free to unburden their innermost thoughts and problems to him as if he was their life long confidant. And he with his command over the spiritual kingdom ministered to their needs.

But it was not always that he talked about spiritual matters. With many he discussed things in which they were interested. We can only presume, now at this distance of time, that probably that was the way by which he drew them toward himself and through that process got them interested in the life spiritual. For who can hold long their own once they come in touch with the divine ? His close and long association with and training under his Master had revealed to him the intricacies of human nature, and this knowledge he utilized in imparting instructions suited to each individual. Many young men soon began to come and it was left to him to train them and cast them in the mould of Sri Ramakrishna. This spiritual ministry thus begun continued throughout the rest of his life.

V

After the passing away of Swami Vivekananda the full responsibility of guiding the mission fell upon him. We have said that he used to remain indrawn most of the time, but it was also true that he was aware of what went on throughout the organization. Though in the beginning there were a few centres, gradually the work of the Order expanded. More centres sprang up but his vigilant eye was on every activity of the mission, without any one being aware of it. He never interfered with the normal working of any centre but everyone looked to him for his blessings on any new venture. He even knew the progress each one of the members of the order made and we have this on the authority of his own words : 'Do you think,' said he to a disciple, 'I don't know what you boys have been doing and how you have been faring in the path of God. I may live in one place and seem to be unconcerned, but I know what is happening to each of you.'

Many a time his mere presence would solve the knottiest of problems that arose in a centre and that without his having the necessity to enquire into them. For in his presence the minds of the aspirants were lifted far above the mundane plane and the petty squabbles that they might have indulged in appeared to them as childish and unbecoming of them. Thus before him all problems melted like snow before the sun.

'Once when he was asked,' writes a disciple, 'to make some new rules for the guidance of the young monks he replied : "Swamiji has already made our rules for us. We do not need to add any new ones. Add more love, attain more devotion and help others to move toward the ideal of God."' That was his prescription. For had he not seen how Sri Ramakrishna without formally inaugurating any organization knitted them, young boys, indissolubly together ? That bond was more firm than all the rules could induce to hold together. He saw that love destroyed hatred and jealousies. Devotion lifted man from the animal-level to the godly state, and naturally in that state men could do with few rules. If one could really be devoted to God how could he hate His creatures ?

And how to add this love ? Unless one loved God intensely one cannot truly love His creatures. All other love is either a trading as Swamiji put it — you do me something and in return I cherish you some affection — or a make-believe. And loving God is not an easy matter. Unless one sees God one cannot love Him truly and wholly. So Maharaj laid great stress on practice of the spiritual disciplines to attain God-realization, to see God. 'Onward, forward' was his watchword to one and all. Practice of spiritual disciplines was his remedy for all types of drawbacks, moral as well as spiritual. For he said that this would clear one's perspective, purify one's mind and make one see light where one saw darkness before. Spiritual disciplines properly practised made one humble.

Someone once asked, 'Maharaj, I am not getting concentration of mind. I do not feel that I am making any progress spiritually.' He replied : 'Practise spiritual disciplines regularly for eight or nine years and then you will reap the fruits of your efforts. Even in a year you will make some progress.' Thus with assurances and encouragements he guided the disciples on the path of the Spirit. But when in spite of his efforts if a disciple failed to make progress, Maharaj helped him to clear the hurdles. Yet he laid great stress on individual effort.

One thing he warned against was about indulging in idle talk. He said, 'Idle talk wastes much energy.' A spiritual aspirant is to be up and doing. His thoughts should be constantly dwelling on God. The Upaniṣads say, 'Know Him alone, give up all vain talk.'[1] For, once the mind is allowed to run where it pleases it will be difficult to gather it again. In the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* there is a beautiful allegory where the Self is likened to the owner, body to the chariot, the discriminating intellect to the charioteer, the mind to the reins, the senses to the horses and the sense objects to the roads.[2] Then it goes on to say, 'One whose intellect is dull and undiscriminating and one who is always of uncontrolled mind, his senses are uncontrolled like. the wicked horses of a charioteer.'[3] They bring the chariot and the owner to grief. Maharaj says, 'Give your mind to the world and it will destroy not only your mind and soul but the body too. On the other hand give it to God and it will contribute not only to the well-being of the mind but of the body also.' Sri Ramakrishna too warns us: 'The mind is like a packet of mustard seeds — once spilled it is very difficult to collect them again.' Hence we must always be circumspect of what we think, of what we talk and what we do.

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[1] तमेवैकं जानथ आत्मानमन्या वाचो विमुञ्चथ ।
Mundaka Up. 2. 2. 5.

[2] आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु ।
बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ।
इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान् ।
Kathopanishad III. 3 and 4.

Swami Brahmananda was a tower of strength to the organization. Under his fostering care it was nurtured during its early days almost from its inception. So when we shall be celebrating his hundred and second birthday—he was only a few days younger to Swamiji—this month it is but meet we look back and think over this divine personality who came into the world to transmit the message of the Incarnation of the age, Sri Ramakrishna, and imbibe some inspiration to carry us onward on the path of God.

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[3] यस्त्वविज्ञानवान् भवत्ययुक्तेन मनसा सदा ।
तस्येन्द्रियाण्यवश्यानि दुष्टाश्वा इव सारथेः ॥

Ibid., 5.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND INDIAN RENAISSANCE

P. SANKARANARAYANAN

Swami Vivekananda is one of the masterminds of modern times. In the range of his intellect, in the intensity of his samadhic experience, in the prolific writings that he has left behind, in the picturesque precision of his language and in the persuasiveness of his exposition which convinces the mind even as it converts the heart, and in the all-too-brief period of years that he lived, Vivekananda has many things in common with Śri Śankara. He may be said to be the modern edition of the great Śankaracharya himself. Like Śri Śankara, Vivekananda was born at a critical period in Indian history. Śri Śankara's avatar was timed by the ebb of the Vedic traditions and the decline of upanishadic thought. He came to resurrect God and the soul from the Buddhistic grave, to free men's minds from their allegiance to the corruptions of unwholesome practices and to purge sanctimonious religious sects of their unholy accretions. In like manner, Vivekananda found that the Vedantic thought and the Vedantic way were being undermined by the Western education and the Western outlook which had taken possession of his countrymen, and he crusaded against the manner in which the Soul of India was sought to be mortgaged to the West. He took it upon himself to vindicate Vedanta by demonstrating that it was founded on the most scientific principles and that the greatest proof of its validity was that it can be realized in the person of every aspirant and has been realized by an unbroken succession of great Seers.

To appreciate the debt that we owe to Vivekananda, we must try to visualise what the fate of our people would have been had he not been born. In this too he stands comparison with Śri Śankara. If Śri Śankara had not appeared at the time that he did, the upanishadic traditions would have vanished before the Buddhistic onslaught and our ancient and glorious religion woud have gone under. Nineteenth century India was in a similar perilous plight. An unholy alliance between materialism and proselytizing Christianity, which was effected under foreign aegis and inspiration, nibbled and gnawed at the roots of our ancient religion and produced a climate hostile to it in every way. In addition, the people themselves were at war with one another in their tenets and practices dividing themselves into groups and sects each claiming an authenticity which it denied to others. Hindu religion was thus exposed to a double danger, of internal division and external onslaught. Its survival depended on the liquidation of both these dangers.

His great Master, Śri Ramakrishna had taught Vivekananda that Religion is one though religions may vary, that there are many paths to the summit and that each of them would lead one to the top if pursued with earnestness and faith. Vivekananda imbibed this teaching to the full. And he discovered that the religion of the Vedanta was not in conflict with any other religion in the world; but, on the contrary, accommodated the fundamentals of every faith under its inclusive umbrella. Thus the two great contributions of Vivekananda in this regard were the restoration of the Vedantic faith to its position of eminence and proclaiming it as a universal religion. To him as to his Master, universal religion did not mean one religion for the whole world, but all religions shedding their credal fanaticisms and living side by side each recognising the value and validity of every other. It is not a patronising tolerance of other faiths, but an inviting hospitality of temper that was the hall-mark of this universality. The refrain of every public address and private conversation of the Swami in Western countries was this feature of Vedantic religion. This opened out a prospect of world unity in a manner not envisaged before and which, if earnestly pursued, would hasten the one world more quickly and more effectively than other methods to achieve that consummation.

Vivekananda came in the authentic traditions of spirituality in India. The Guru and his *upadeśa* are indispensable for spiritual education. The Guru is equated with God Himself and receives a like adoration. The seeds of wisdom and spirituality have to be planted in a mind fit and ready to receive it and they grow by the combined influence of the teacher's grace and the pupil's endeavour. In this, Narendra, as Vivekananda was then known, was extremely fortunate to have had a God-Man as his Guru who longed for the discipleship of the sophisticated youth to convert him by his touch into a realized soul.

In another respect too Vivekananda underlined the great tradition of spirituality in vogue in every country and particularly so in India. Ātma Vidya which is spiritual wisdom *par excellence* demands as the precondition of its achievement a sense of complete renunciation of everything that would bind the soul to the things of the earth. Sannyasa and spirituality, have generally gone together. After the passing away of his Master, Vivekananda organised the Master's intimate disciples into a band of sannyasins determined to pursue the Sadhanas that they had been taught, and to carry the message of his teacher to revitalize their religion and to give a new vigour to its practices. The disciples became monks of a new order into which they formed themselves and thus the institution of the Ramakrishna Math came to be. The Ramakrishna Mission is more widely known than the Math. But it is well to emphasise that the Math is the seed-bed of the Mission and it was Vivekananda's purpose to rear a line of sannyasins who would attain a high degree of spiritual eminence so that they could invest their teachings with the certificate of validity proved in their own achievements.

Vivekananda's order of sannyasins had a new orientation. Till his day, every spiritual aspirant who took Sannyas was, in a sense, individualistic. Generally speaking he was concerned with his own personal salvation. Vivekananda coupled the welfare of the world with that urge. The motto of the Ramakrishna Order is *ātmanomokshārtham jagaddhitāya ca*: 'for the liberation of the self and for the welfare of the world'. He laid before his disciples the rules of sacrifice and service. One of the great lessons that he had learnt from his Master is that Jiva is Siva, that every man is an embodiment of the Supreme, that service of man is the true worship of God. It is this idea that is at the basis of the various forms of humanitarian work which the members of the Ramakrishna Mission have been doing with conspicuous success everywhere. Vivekananda emphasized that true spirituality should *bend down* to service so that the conditions of material life could improve before any kind of spiritual endeavour could be possible at all. His heart was anguished to see the plight of the poor and the famished, of the forlorn and the forbidden, and so poignant was his grief that he even postponed the culture of the spirit among his countrymen to the nursing of their bodies. He felt that one could not attain spirituality with an empty stomach. The latter-day movements of uplift of the lower classes had their beginnings in this aspect of his teachings and he pleaded passionately for the removal of all kinds of distinctions which would make man forget that he was brother to fellow man.

Vivekananda was rooted in the immortal past of India. Apart from the upanishadic foundations of his Vedantic teachings, he always brought to his hearers the vision of ancient India with its divine heroes and heroines, with Rama, Krishna, Sita, Savitri and Damayanti. To a generation like the present to which these names have become faint memories, Vivekananda's voice recalls these great examples of our ancient culture and holds them forth as ideals by which every man and woman among us should fashion our lives. It is in this way particularly that Vivekananda's passionate patriotism comes out in all its vividness. To him love of country does not have a mere geographical significance. It is love of all that India has stood for in the past, for the ideals embodied in the best of her sons and daughters, for the ways of life inscribed in her sacred literature. Thus understood, patriotism is an inclusive love and adoration of the motherland and is not confined to small groups or territories. Were he alive today, Vivekananda would not understand the divisions that now undermine the sense of unity among our people, that contaminate their minds and constrict their hearts. 'Every Indian is my brother' is the eloquent note on which he once ended his great admonition to his countrymen and we have need, more now than ever before, to pay heed to his words.

Vivekananda did not stop with mere love of his motherland. He was proud of his country, proud of it for her achievements in the past, and hopeful that it would be the teacher of the world. 'India', he once said, 'this motherland of ours, this is the land from whence, like the tidal waves, spirituality and philosophy have again and again rushed out and deluged the world, and this is the land from whence once more such tides must proceed in order to bring life and vigour into the decaying races of mankind. I stand in awe before the unbroken procession of seers of shining centuries, and here and there a dim link in the chain, only to flare up with added brilliance to the next, and there she is walking with her own majestic steps — my Motherland — to fulfil her glorious destiny, which no power on earth or in heaven can check — the regeneration of man the brute into man the God.'

Thus Vivekananda was not a patriot with a political label. His patriotism had an intensely religious foundation. It derived its strength and fervour from his saintliness. He fully believed in the great mission of his country to reconvert its people to ways of a spiritual life and to invite peoples of the other lands as well to do likewise. Writing about him, Nagendra Nath Gupta who had personal experience of Ramakrishna and Vivekananda, says: 'His thoughts ranged over every phase of the future of India, and he gave all that was in him to his country and to the world. The world will rank him among the prophets and princes of peace, and his message has been heard with reverence and admiration. For his countrymen he has left a priceless heritage of virility, abounding vitality and invincible strength of will. Swami Vivekananda stands on the threshold of the dawn of a new day for India, a heroic and dauntless figure, the herald and harbinger of the glorious hour when India shall again sweep forward to the van of the nations.'

Swami Vivekananda laid the foundation of resurgent India. He was the pioneer of Indian renaissance. Reminding us that we are children of the Immortal, '*amṛtasya putrāḥ*', he bade us break the chains that bind us, bade us proudly proclaim : 'I am an Indian, I am a free Man, I am God Himself.' He brought to us a consciousness of spiritual swaraj and a passionate longing for it so that all other kinds of swaraj, political, economic and others, may be securely based on it and last for ever without disruption and decay.

Finally, when we celebrate his birth centenary, proclaim his greatness and acknowledge our debt to him, let us not forget that gentle Englishman, Mr. Goodwin who served Vivekananda with rare constancy as his stenographer and to whose loving labours we owe the plentiful record of the Swami's speeches delivered in the various countries of the West which constitute a literature as ennobling as it is enlightening. In its pages, we see not only the Swami's mastery of spiritual truths, and upanishadic passages, but also his command of English which frequently rises to oratorical flights and stirring periods of inimitable eloquence.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND "IDOLATRY"

K. SUBRAHMANYAM

"Idolatry" is a question-begging term, because it carries with it, by long usage, an association of disparagement. Etymologically the word means only image-worship, but it condemns the use of images in worship, even as it names the practice. But even "image-worship" is not precisely applicable to the use of images in worship by the Hindus. The image is only an aid to worship, as any one knows who is acquainted with the forms and processes of puja ; for, first the divinity in the heart of the worshipper is invoked and then identified with the image before him. The truth, 'The Kingdom of God is within you', is not allowed to be forgotten by the worshipper. Certainly the Hindus' 'image-worship' is not the rudimentary religion, the fetishism, of the primitive man. When Swami Vivekananda was asked by the then Maharaja of Alwar, a conceited and shallow pseudo-intellectual, 'I have no faith in idol-worship ; I really cannot worship wood, earth, stone or metal ; does this mean that I shall fare worse in the life hereafter ?' the Swami replied, 'Nowhere have I found a single Hindu worshipping an image, saying "O Stone ! I worship Thee ! O Metal be merciful to me !" Every one is worshipping, O Maharaja, the same one God, who is the Supreme Spirit, the Soul of Pure Knowledge.' Says St. John of the Gospels : 'God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.' All religions will hasten to accept this saying. But the Hindus may be permitted to add, by way of a rider, Sri Ramakrishna's answer to a controversialist who asserted, 'Surely God is not the earthen image that is worshipped.' 'Why call it an earthen image ? The divine image is made of the Spirit.' At Alwar, Swami Vivekananda merely paraphrased the words of his Master.

But is this logically perfect answer the end of the controversy ? The Swami was too earnest a prophet and far too well acquainted with man's ways to forget that the realities of a problem often overflowed the terms that men employed in arguing about it. The Swamiji's letters are full of his fear of the danger that lurks in image-worship, however logically it may be justified. He says : 'Millions of rupees have been spent only that the temple-doors at Benares or Brindavan may play at opening or shutting all day long ! Now the Lord is having his toilet, now he is taking His meals, now he is busy on something else we know not what ?' Similarly : 'What I am most afraid of is the worshiproom. It is not bad in itself, but there is a tendency to make this all in all . . . This is what makes me nervous.' The symbols belong to a lower, grosser layer than the truth which they symbolise and this lower layer exerts a strong gravitational pull that makes it difficult for a struggling soul to soar higher. The earth is more constantly and vividly present to us than any higher region and few have undergone the long and sustained discipline of soul which is needed before one comes habitually to look at things 'in Truth and Spirit'. The neighbours of Jesus could not understand in what sense he had come down from Heaven: 'Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it that he saith, "I come down from heaven?"' It is from the same mentality that men have demanded miracles as a proof of the spiritual eminence of a Messiah. We understand only matter and will not recognize spirit unless it expresses itself in terms of matter.

The gravamen of the charge of idolatry is not the setting up of an image as an outward aid to the temper of worship within oneself, but one's inability to look through the image of one's own making to the higher values that extend beyond. The image, rightly employed, ought to serve as a window that reveals to our vision the unwalled landscape of Spirit for ever stretching away. But, if the window is opaque, however large it be, it is not truly a window. The worship of any object, institution, cause or principle, however vast, which engrosses our attention, affection and devotion as though it is a thing of ultimate value and which makes us ignore the Ultimate — this is idolatry. The root of this sin, both in its primary and extended metaphorical senses, are the same. A fanatic who goes about breaking idols because they offend his own notions of God and His proper worship, who clamorously asserts the dogmas of his own narrow faith, as being worthy of being imposed on others by all means, is more of an idolator than the humble and pious person who bends before an image as his symbol of the Highest. Such idolatry is to be detected in the philanthropist's exclusive espousal of a cause; in the patriot's deification of his country's greatness; in the politician's partisan zeal; and in the parent's obsession with the favourite child. It does not help to say that it is disproportionate intensity of devotion that constitutes idolatry. The question is what makes the devotion disproportionate. There is no such thing as a small cause, which can justify only a tepid devotion. The smallest of causes may serve as a pinwhole through which we can gain a vision of the vast sky and the far horizon. When a grandmother complained to Sri Ramakrishna that she could never forget her favourite grandchild even for the purpose of engaging in her devotions, he suggested a remedy, startling in its simplicity and illuminative as a flash of lightning. 'Serve your grandchild,' he said, 'taking him to be Sri Krishna.' A man may serve his family as a patriot serves his country, with utter self-effacement and magnanimous forbearance of the wrongs done to him by other members. So may a great patriot serve his country, striving to make it an exemplar of a collective *Dharma*, as Gandhiji did. It does not matter whether one lives in a great house or a small one; the air inside must open out into the air outside. Otherwise, even within the largest mansion one must suffocate and perish. The *Bhagavadgita* has once for all defined idolatry and its attendant fanaticism in the description of *tāmasic* knowledge: it is to take some one object as though it were the whole, without a grasp of the One Real. Contrarywise, the antidote to idolatry in all its forms is indicated by *sātvic* knowledge, 'the knowledge by which one imperishable essence is seen in all things, undivided in the divided.'

'As the undivided among the divided;' 'the unborn born in various ways' — such are the paradoxes to which our God-conscious sages have had recourse as they contemplated the Eternal and the transient universe together. *Asparśa Yoga*, the union without contact, is a paradox employed for similar purpose by the Advaitins. The *Bhagavadgita*, which cuts across theological and metaphysical systems, deliberately defies verbal and logical consistency in its exposition of the same truth: 'All beings abide in me, but I do not abide in them.

And yet the beings do not abide in me, behold, that is my divine mystery.' God would seem to be in the universe as the meaning is in the word. The word, as spoken sound or as written script, conveys the meaning without standing in any necessary, inevitable, indispensable relation to it. It is not real in the same sense as the meaning, for the word changes with the language but the meaning need not alter on that account. The meaning may exist also without any word. Thus, all objects, all beings, all relationships, all situations and all activities do not, even taken together and in their totality, constitute God ; they constitute only the heresy of pantheism. All these are mere symbols, images helpful in inducting us into higher values and ultimately into the Highest. But they are liable to betray us into idolatry if we think of them, individually or together, as existing in their own right.

The bigness or the smallness of the symbol is irrelevant to its symbolic purpose. 'Īśvara dwells in the entire universe ; (impartible) He dwells in the minute and the mutable of this vast mutability which is the universe' — declares an Upaniṣad. Even the holiness associated with a cause may delude one to forgetfulness of its symbolic value and may prove a barrier to further progress towards the Absolute. Nestorius of Antioch could tell Emperor Theodosius, 'Give me, O Caesar, give me the earth purged of heretics and I will give you in exchange the Kingdom of Heaven.' The opposite of this temper, the spiritual climate in which idolatry, in its widest sense, cannot live is represented by the answer of St. Ignatius Loyola when he was once asked what his feelings would be if the Pope were to suppress the Society of Jesus. Said he, 'A quarter of an hour of prayer, and I should think no more about it.' Swami Vivekananda dwelt in this same climate throughout his life, for did he not say in 1898, with a bare 50 months to go before he attained his samadhi, when he had just fulfilled the long cherished purpose of buying the site for the Math, that if he could not otherwise find the money for the plague-relief that was urgently called for, he would sell the newly bought Math grounds ? 'What ! Should we care for Math and possessions when disposing of them would relieve thousands suffering before our eyes ? ' Therefore one is not surprised when, in the Swami's letters, in its proper context, one comes across the passage : 'But narrow bigotry militates against Sri Ramakrishna's principles . . . Rather let his name be drowned in oblivion, and his teachings bear fruit instead.' Similarly when he found that in the Mayavati Ashrama, 'dedicated to Advaita and Advaita alone,' ritualistic worship centred round the image of Sri Ramakrishna had been introduced during his absence, he did not hesitate to express his disapproval. His was an austere spirit approaching the heroic, considering that he proclaimed himself 'the servant of the servants of Sri Ramakrishna's servants.'

The danger to spirituality issuing from the use of an image in worship is nothing ; the insidious and perilous form of idolatry is our belief that we can cherish the great values of life, ignoring the Supreme Value which confers its validity on all values. Lofty ethical idealism, ardent humanism or consuming patriotism are truncated forms of spirituality, actually or potentially dangerous, if those who hold them are content to remain in that truncated condition. But then they may be unconsciously groping beyond the barrier that now holds their progress in check. In this effort they can find no better guide than Swami Vivekananda. All the liberating enthusiasms of a modern, progressive society find in him a response, if not indeed their source. But he teaches also whereat they should culminate, far transcending all risk of idolatry.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND THE YOUNG SCIENTISTS OF INDIA

A Symposium

Introduction

SWAMI BUDHANANDA

In the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre of New York we have a small study circle of a handful of young Indian research scholars studying in this city. By sheer accident they are all at the present moment students of science, some working for their doctorate and some doing post-doctorate research. In the evening of every first Sunday of the month members of the study circle meet at the Centre and study Hinduism in some of its aspects. At present we are studying the yogas and other works by Swami Vivekananda. After reading there follow discussions, sometimes quite lively ones, on religious issues and attempts are made to understand them from the scientific point of view.

In this our small group, apart from what we study for deepening our knowledge of religion or for our personal edification, we have been trying to cultivate a certain attitude or perspective for field-work in India when these scholars return home. From their further study of sciences in their own branches and their general experiences while living in the West and from what little we have been studying of religion here, these keen minds have come to develop a greater reverence for their own faith. They have in general come to hold the view that in the spiritual experiences and findings of the Hindus, there is a vast accumulation of relevant data without a reverential study, understanding and experience of which, no total concept of reality can ever be formed. Science must be open-minded to facts. A truly bold scientific attitude cannot countenance any form of segregationism to any order of facts.

From our discussions and deliberations thiswise we have come to believe that for building a greater future for India, for the matter of that for entire humanity, we need proper study of sciences to go hand in hand with the proper study of religion. This 'proper study' would mean that a pervasive encounter of science and religion must take place in one's personal life. While science would inform, religion must transform. Through the study of the sciences intellect should be quickened and through the practice of spiritual disciplines mind should be purified. Then alone we shall become men capable of handling new situations of humanity in a creative way.

Obviously the young Indian scientists must learn from the Western knowledge of science. It is indeed a great boon that the vast scientific knowledge accumulated by the Western man through about three centuries by much labour and sacrifice is an open store. For this Indians can never be too grateful to the West.

But in acquiring knowledge of science from the West the young Indian scientist must stay wary about one thing that often passes, unnoticed, as scientific knowledge without being scientific at all. And that is the Western scientists' extra-scientific views on things spiritual. Great and specialized knowledge in a branch of science would not necessarily qualify a scientist to speak on things of the spirit. Vast erudition in science and spiritual illiteracy can co-exist, though it could be otherwise too. It is through the instrumentality of the senses and the intellect that we gather our scientific knowledge. But contrary is the case with the spiritual knowledge.

The *Katha Upaniṣad* says: 'When the five instruments of knowledge stand still, together with the mind, and the intellect does not function that is the supreme state.' This is why in the knowledge of science the spiritual knowledge is not inherent. That is however, not to say that the two types of disciplines are incompatible or antagonistic. One can easily carry on keen experiments in the laboratory and also practise deep meditation in the shrine at home. The important thing is to clearly see the point that there are things to be seen with open eyes and there are also things to be seen with closed eyes. And we are required to see both ways. We are challenged by our times to do so for gaining fuller knowledge of the world and of ourselves. And knowledge is power, as everyone knows.

Most of the Western scientists who cared to have held and expressed views on matters spiritual, appear to have done so in a derivative way. Their fundamental object of study has been matter or nature. From what they have known of matter, they have derived by inference, their conclusions in regard to things spiritual. But how are they justified or scientific in doing that? If they would claim that what exists is only matter, and that everything of matter has been known in a scientific way, then there would be a case, for argument's sake, to take their extra-scientific views seriously. Relativity characterizes every piece of information we receive from science even in regard to its main object of study. How much more should it be then so in regard to things which are not within the area of its direct study?

There is no one common attitude to things spiritual which all scientists would accept, some very intellectual scientists appear to be quite satisfied that there are no such things as 'final causes'. Nature is nothing but matter in motion. And this motion is governed by blind forces and laws. The world is utterly purposeless. It is sentimentality to think that there is such a thing as a cosmic purpose, which everything in the universe fulfils, and in doing so, attains significance for itself. And if in the very schemes of things there is no sense and purpose, there cannot be any meaning and purpose in human life either. From this it logically follows that morals and values are nothing more than concoctions of conveniences. One inevitable corollary of such a view is that no moral responsibility attaches to the scientist for his discoveries. These believers in the ultimate irrationality of things do not think that any ethical code is binding on them except those which they think are conducive to their self-interest.

The interesting thing, however, is that on the basis of the same facts, there are other scientists who hold a different view in regard to things spiritual. Their view is represented in these words of Albert Einstein:

> 'Now, even though the realms of religion and science in themselves are clearly marked off from each other, nevertheless there exist between them two strong reciprocal relationships and dependencies. Though religion may be that which determines the goal, it has nevertheless, learnt from science, in the broadest sense, what means will contribute to the attainment of goals it has set up. But science can only be created by those who are thoroughly imbued with the aspiration towards truth and understanding. This source of feeling however, springs from the sphere of religion. To this then also belongs the faith in the possibility that the regulations valid for the world of existence are rational, that is, comprehensible to reason. I cannot conceive of a scientist without that profound faith. The situation may be expressed by an image: Science without religion is lame, religion without science is blind.'*

Both these views are products of tentative derivative knowledge of those who have not directly addressed themselves to things spiritual in the manner they did to things material.

Moreover the Indian scientists will also have to be aware of the fact that in India and elsewhere there are indubitable and fool-proof records of the direct experience of God by such men as are as trustworthy as any of the great scientists of the world. The young Indian scientist, while he studies sciences, is truth-bound to respect these two orders of facts, discerned in two different kinds of laboratories of life, one by the scientist and the other by the saint. Otherwise he cannot be truly scientific in his attitude.

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* *Out of my later years* by Albert Einstein, Philosophical Library, 1950, New York, page 26.

This may render his scientific task more profound and difficult, but also certainly more rewarding. Cultivation of a wholly new attitude not generally shared by the Western scientist is therefore called for. His life itself will have to be moulded in a different way. In fact a life in which the scientific disciplines of looking without and spiritual disciplines of looking within are practised with equal enthusiasm, devotion and precision, that life is going to be different, anyway. They will be a new kind of human beings rarely to be seen in the world.

It may be noted that no kind of shallow hob-nobbing of science and religion is suggested here. Not to know enough of science can very well pass as religion; not to know enough of religion may very well pass as science too! But we are not speaking of an encounter between science and 'religion'. We are not speaking of accommodation, we are speaking of the necessity of enlarging the areas of adventure for the young Indian scientist, and the insight born of the living of such a life he has to carry in whatever he thinks and does.

Facts and forces constitute in India of today a picture of the state of affairs which are pretty challenging to all thinking people. It of course behoves the scions of an ancient race like Indians to have challenging times rather than soft times. This will bring forth their strength. It is precisely the time to see the ocean across the waves, to stand firmly for the ideals, for intrepid thinking and brave self-application. It is no time to be swamped by happenings and apprehensions. However much critical may be our situation, we must always remember, almost none of us has yet done his best, exerted his utmost. Therefore we have no right to despair. Indeed we have no grounds for despair. We have only challenges to face and accept.

In the making of India of our dreams no doubt every Indian and others too will contribute. But in making of that India which will triumph over all tests and turmoils, most far-reaching contribution will come from the young scientists who will mould their lives in the way we have discussed. Only such young scientists, will be able to teach in theory and practice how the national spiritual heritage of India can not only be saved but made more living in spite of industrialization and modernization of Indian life. By the word 'young' is here indicated fearless and enthusiastic men with a spirit of search for truth.

Such scientists of India will require an example of fulfilled promise and an inspiration which will blaze forth within themselves a new kind of will-power to know the world in God and God in the world in a new way. This example and inspiration they can find in an abundant manner in the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda. No knower of God in the world was such a devoted student of science as Swami Vivekananda. No one else paid like him such great tribute to science and scientists and cultivated the spirit of science in whatever he thought and did. He has shown, following his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, that it is perfectly possible to be truly scientific and truly spiritual simultaneously without compromising either.

In this symposium the young scientists of our study circle who are going to devote their lives to the study and teaching of science in India are expressing their own views on the issue on hand. These, we hope, will stimulate new thinking in India among the young scientists who are also aware of the preciousness of the spiritual heritage of the nation.

It will be a significant tribute to the memory of Swami Vivekananda on the occasion of his birth centenary to do some clear thinking on a national scale as to how India is going to stay true to the teachings of the saints and also respect the findings of the sages of science.

1

H. N. NANJUNDIAH

Nature is the mother of all sciences. It is the very essence of nature to embody all scientific truths, whether known or unknown to man. When a scientist discovers a new law, whether through experimentation or through logical reasoning, he has done nothing more than understand one more aspect of nature which was hitherto unknown to him. This leads us to make an indisputable hypothesis that, despite the discovery of many great scientific truths in recent decades, there would almost always exist many more greater truths hidden in the womb of time, only to be discovered by future scientists who may be endowed with the requisite background and abilities to comprehend these truths at the respective levels of sophistication. The fact that men, as scientists, do not know today how to explain many happenings everyday around us is in itself indicative of the truth of this hypothesis. That we do not know many yet-to-be-known truths of nature, therefore, cannot deny their existence. Science does not negate what is hidden in nature. Natural scientists cannot hence negate what is unknown to them about nature. It needs hard work and planned effort to come to know them within one's life time. Of necessity, it calls for strenuous preparation and concentration of the minds of totally dedicated men if they were to be able at all to perceive what is yet unknown to them in any given area of knowledge.

Among us, we have greater scientists and we have lesser scientists. In general, the difference between them is one of faith and perseverance. Those who pursue the quest for knowledge about the unknown truths of nature with a greater degree of faith and perseverance are most likely to become greater scientists. Those who depart from the chosen path at the faintest sign of impediment or hardship are sure to join the fold of lesser scientists. As young scientists of modern India, aspiring to scale great heights of knowledge about the truths of nature, nothing will, therefore, be more damaging to the attainment of our aspirations than two basic wrong assumptions many of us are often prone to make. The first involves the unreasonable attitude of assuming that whatever one does not know owing to one's own perceptual limitations does not necessarily exist. The second has to do with the wishful thinking that great things can be achieved or should be possible of being achieved with no real effort on one's part without realizing that 'no man ever climbed the ladder of success with his hands in the pocket'.

The best available illustrative proof of the imperative need to pay heed to these all-time lessons of life lies in the life and work of Swami Vivekananda. He began his early life as would most young scientists of today. He was doubtless a scientist *par excellence,* and yet, it was to be that a power nothing short of the divine influence of Sri Ramakrishna that could remove the lingering doubts in the young mind of Narendra about the existence of an absolute truth — the highest of all truths of nature — the oneness of all existence. He was a man of strong physique and a tenacious capacity for hard work, hardly matched by any of his fellow men. And yet, it was to be that nothing short of unflinching perseverance and the greatest possible personal sacrifice and effort through the whole range of spiritual disciplines that could reveal this absolute truth to him. And the result was, fortunately for the good of the modern world, the transformation of the young sceptic Narendra into the greatest of all scientists — Swami Vivekananda, in the greatest of all sciences — the Science of the Absolute. That being so with this giant of a man, what of us! It was, indeed, a privilege to have had a Swami Vivekananda among men to demonstrate the validity of this scientific approach to life not too long ago. It is even a greater privilege for us today to be able to participate in the centenary festival of that same Vivekananda and to recount this great blessing a hundred times in the meaningful conduct of all aspects of our life.

There can be no greater lesson for modern man, especially for the young scientists of modern India, from this proven fact of recorded history than the realization that, irrespective of the scientific field one may have chosen to study and notwithstanding the distinctions one may have already attained, one needs to be humble enough to have faith in the possible existence of higher truths one does not yet know and in the possibility of perceiving them if only one is prepared to pursue the paths leading to these truths with an unchanging purpose and an unwavering mind. One who ignores this will do so to the detriment of one's own scientific outlook. This is no small lesson to serve as a guide to one's life. It is especially valid as a reminder to all mankind today that the truths perceived by our ancient men, the truths that have endured the severest tests of time, the truths that have been the very foundation of our Hindu way of life, the truths that have defined for us the purpose of man, the truths that have given substance and meaning to human existence in this world, the truths that have enabled men to live in peace among other men irrespective of race or creed, and the truths that transformed a Narendra into a Vivekananda could be within the personal experience of every living person through an actual and practical application of this basic lesson to one's daily life. What else can be more truly scientific than this!

2

ARAVINDAKSHA MENON

The relationship between science on the one hand and religion on the other seems to many as that between two contradictory, mutually excluding principles, and any agreement between the two appears as incomprehensible as that between darkness and light. This is mostly the result of narrow-minded outlook and gross misunderstanding caused by either side. Many religious leaders refuse to accept any piece of information obtained from scientific observation. They claim that all religious theories and experiences are beyond reason and demand every religious person to believe without question all that they preach, and silently obey their impositions. On the other side we find that many scientists consider religion as a heap of unfounded theories, ridiculous doctrines, and superstitions. They maintain that religion substitutes mythological figures for realistic facts and by feeding them, lulls the questioning, inquiring intellect. It is pointed out from the pages of history that time after time religion has been the major cause of hatred, wars and social and political tyranny among people. They are therefore satisfied to have no relation whatsoever with religion. It has to be noted here that most of these people have themselves never studied religion, nor have they tried to analyse the problems dealt with by religion. We shall now try to examine this controversy in some detail.

All progress made by man has been the result of his attempts to rise above nature. This nature is both external and internal. By external nature is meant all the physico-chemical phenomena taking place around us and in our bodies. The internal nature represents the subtle workings of the mind and the ultimate reality of our own existence. All the attempts of modern science have been directed towards the study of the external nature. The investigation, of numerous physical and chemical phenomena which take place around us, has definitely been highly rewarding. And application of this knowledge of living organisms has shed much light, on several basic biological functions, which in turn has explained some aspects of mental activity. Besides these basic aspects of knowledge science has been beneficial to the world in several other ways as well. It has made life more comfortable, it has decreased to a great extent sufferings due to illness, and it has helped to bring together people of different parts of the world, so that they could work united for a common goal. These achievements are by no means insignificant, or negligible. But all the knowledge that scientific investigation has brought about has centred around the problem : 'How does this universe function? What are the mechanisms underlying the various physico-chemical phenomena we perceive in our life?' It has never attempted to answer problems such as the goal of human life, the real nature of our self, or the existence of a supernatural power. As it stands at present, only religion deals with these aspects of knowledge. It is therefore obvious that contrary to the common understanding, science has not disproved any of the religious ideas and has no conflict with religion.

Religious pursuits have followed a line quite different from that of science. Any aspect of knowledge, in general, involves the interaction between the subject i.e. perceiver and the object perceived. While modern science has been concentrating on the object, religion has focussed its attention on the subject, the true nature of our own existence. This mode of investigation necessitates that we cannot progress through the information gathered by the senses; the senses perceive things only outside us. Nor is it bound by the reasoning of the mind, for the mind also functions outside the self. It is therefore imperative that in order to proceed on this line of investigation one has to look inward, into one's own self. And any aspect of knowledge gained by this method will be by self experimentation not mediated by the senses or the mind. Is this search then scientific? Before answering this question we have to see what religion instructs a beginner to do during this investigation. To a rational mind religion offers a discipline every step of which can be verified by experience. It does not lay before him any set of theories he has to believe blindly, nor does it impose upon him any moral discipline he has to follow without questioning. Its goal is not to get something in a different world after death; it promises divine vision to everyone in this very life at this very moment if he lives up to it. It shows him the various techniques employed by his predecessors for this purpose, and it is up to him to decide which particular path to follow, or even to discover new techniques if none of the already known ones suits the conditions in which he lives. As far as faith is concerned, all it demands is a working faith in the experiences of the religious leaders who lived before him — a faith similar to that of a scientist in his fellow-scientists' experimental results. On the basis of the experience of innumerable religious preceptors religion declares that the whole universe is a manifestation of the eternal, omniscient, omnipotent Being which is beyond all qualities. This infinite absolute Being, when viewed through the glass of time, space and causation, appears as the finite — the universe with all its forms. The numerous phenomena we observe in the universe are all part of the same infinite existence. According to religion, the cause of all our sufferings in the world is that we are deluded, we have lost consciousness of our real nature. The goal of every living organism, religion declares, is to realize this fact that we are non-different from the universal Soul which is Existence Absolute, Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute. When one realizes this identity he is no longer subject to the miseries of the world and enjoys the Absolute Bliss which is his true nature. This in short is the essence of the Hindu religion. We have the right to test each and every aspect of the exposition by our own experience in this very life.

We shall now see whether this aspect of knowledge brought about by religion is in any way contradictory to what we know from the experiments of modern science. We find that the information acquired by science up to this time does not in any way contradict this statement. Further, science is now more prepared to accept this unitary view than it was ever before. Science has now proved by direct experimentation that the various kinds of matter and different forms of energy are interconvertible. This evidence indicates that they all are ultimately of the same nature. An extrapolation of this view would lead to the idea of one infinite being whose manifestation the entire universe is. Observation of common mechanisms of widely different terrestrial as well as extraterrestrial phenomena could conform to such a unitary origin. As seen above, religious experience has shown that such an infinite being is Knowledge Absolute and Bliss Absolute. Science has so far not recognized any consciousness or will in the cosmic energy; it had contended that life originated and is perpetuated only by collision of molecules at random and is just a matter of chance. However, several scientists are being disappointed with such an explanation and quite a few have spoken clearly against it. Just to quote one authority in the field, Oparin writes, 'Purposiveness pervades the whole living world from the top to the bottom, right down to the most elementary forms of life.' How close this idea comes to the statement in the Vedas that the whole universe originated in and is sustained by Brahman!

With reference to India and especially the young scientists of the country the above discussion warrants particular attention. We are at present passing through a period of ideational turmoil, and we find ourselves blindfolded and lost in this turbulent atmosphere. We have a special gift handed over to us by our ancestors. Our history is abundant with great men and women who attained spiritual realization and enlightened their fellowmen and have left their valuable experience for us to study and follow. But we should not forget that much of these great teachings are at present lying in a few old books and to the vast masses of India religion means rituals, certain rules regarding food, rights and privileges of caste, and at the most a faith in God to whom they can pray when in trouble. Several men who occupy prominent positions in religious institutions like to remain in a world of their own, having an external semblance to the life of a few centuries ago, and this they think is being religious. They are opposed to any change, and frown on all things modern. This attitude has naturally repelled many an intelligent person from religion and this new class of so-called rationalists tends to just laugh away any religious idea. They are clearly misled by a wrong conception of religion. We have yet another group, of crude materialists who like to preach 'eat, drink, and be happy, for tomorrow we die'. Both these classes try to take the help of science to support their ideas. But we should remember that science does not advise us, nay it does not let us abandon any idea, however tempting it may be to do, without testing it. It should also not be forgotten that easy pleasure-seeking life is by no means in compliance with the spirit of science. Science has not come to this position lying on a bed of roses without a thought of the morrow; it had to struggle hard through several testing times and had to undergo tremendous sacrifices before it became acceptable to the world. Even now the progress of science is through hard work and austere life on the part of the scientists.

There is a feeling expressed from several quarters that in India our problems are because we have not progressed enough materially speaking. We are often carried away by the idea that the Western countries have crossed much of the difficulties by industrialization and increased production of food and other daily requirements, and could make life enjoyable with innumerable luxuries. Well, no sane person can belittle the need or urgency of material comforts and even luxuries. We have to adopt scientific methods for agriculture and industries and step up our production. But let us not for a moment dream that when all this is accomplished we will have no problems or if at all very little. We should look a little more closely at the situation in the West. In spite of the abundance of material pleasures, people are not satisfied; they want more and more and still more. The human mind has a tremendous capacity to convert a luxury into a necessity and then to look for new luxuries. This is an endless process. A search for happiness exclusively in material objects leads to, as is evidenced in the materially advanced Western countries, increased mental tension, neurosis, frustration and consequent unhappiness. The warning of the famous scientist Alexis Carrel — 'Pure science never directly brings any harm. But when its fascinating beauty dominates our mind and enslaves our thoughts in the realm of inanimate matter, it becomes dangerous,'—has gone more or less unheeded. And the result is obvious. Let us not repeat the same mistake in our country.

Fortunately we are not completely lost. There is a clear way left in front of us. The words of Swami Vivekananda, although spoken more than half a century ago, are still fresh and give us light even in this dark age. It is to his credit — one of the great things he did as far as we have understood him — that he, to borrow a word from science, distilled the crude mixture of all the religious ideas collected from times immemorial, and handed over to us the precious truth therefrom in a form we can easily comprehend. He recognized the progress of modern science seventy years ago and advised India to look to the West and accept from there whatever available. But this does not mean that we should forsake what we received from our forefathers. As Swamiji clearly emphasized, there is not a single essential idea we inherited from the sages in olden days that has to be abandoned in order to modernize ourselves. However there are several conceptions, rituals, customs, which have become linked with religion more or less like moss that has covered a precious stone. Many of these practices were well-fitting to the social set-up at one time, and therefore served as external structure for the expression of the inner ideas. Obviously the world we live in at present is far different from what it looked like when most of our scriptures were written. Therefore several of the subsidiary instructions that we find in our ancient scriptures have very little relevance to our life. Furthermore scientific investigation has produced much information which shows that many concepts of our ancestors about the universe are just not true. We have therefore to take special care in deciding what to accept and which parts to reject. We will however find that all the essential ideas have well stood the long period of time and still are of prime importance, and may be expressed in different words, with modified meaning. We will see that religion did not teach us to hate other sects or peoples; it did not cause bloodshed or sufferings. It is so many parasitic elements which covered religion that extracted their energy from religion and brought about tremendous misery to the world in the name of religion. On the contrary we will find that true religion is an experimental science dedicated to know the real nature of ourselves and bring to us freedom from all miseries of the world. Such a scientific approach to religion is what we need, not blind faith in everything heard from religious books or religious leaders, nor a disdainful look at all religious ideas; and this will help tremendously to speed up the progress of humanity.

3

M. A. BHAKTA

It is customary in every country for its experts to analyse periodically its achievements and failures during the period of review, in the spheres of politics, economics and so on, and to suggest appropriate measures that are to be taken to avoid pitfalls and ensure more progress in the future. In India, the one big question that exercises the minds of all the thinking Indians and friends of India all over the world, which is discussed quite so often, and yet, which dodges a clear answer, is: Will India sacrifice her spiritual heritage at the altar of the industrialization process that she is currently passing through? That she need not, and, most probably, would not do so was declared by Swami Vivekananda more than sixty years ago. It is in the fitness of things, therefore, to consider this question in all earnestness, today, when we celebrate his birth centenary.

The question is basically one involving religion and science. The satisfactory answer to this question, therefore, obviously depends on how the one views the other — whether as a friend or as a foe. On behalf of religion Swami Vivekananda has enthusiastically welcomed science by asserting that it, and it alone can provide material welfare to the suffering humanity and urged religion to seek the help of science to get rid of superstitions that have grown so thick around it. Now it should be the turn of the scientists in India and all the world over to come forward and declare that it is religion, and religion alone, that is competent enough to attend to the spiritual and ethical needs of mankind, and to seek the aid of religion in fighting the growing cynicism among the people, which if unchecked in time, may eventually lead the entire world, religion and science included, to complete destruction.

A heavy duty, therefore, rests on the shoulders of the scientists. It is high time they stopped scoffing at religion and sit down to give to this problem the most serious thought which it so urgently demands and which they, as scientists are capable of doing. They will not fail to see that in the final analysis there is no basic conflict between religion and science in so far as both have the same locus of origin, i.e., the human mind, and both aim at knowing the ultimate truth.

At some point of time in the distant past man became conscious of his existence, his actions became deliberate rather than purely instinctive, he was awed by the forces of nature around him and was greatly intrigued by the endless panorama of birth, growth and death passing around him. The two questions that must have come to his mind most naturally were: 'Who am I?' 'What is the secret of the nature around me?' — the questions that respectively constituted the seeds of religion and science.

Obviously, it was the first question 'Who am I?' that received his first attention, for it needed no external tools or instruments. It is a self-reflection process and any external aid would be a perturbation, rather than a help. Thus, it was in deep meditation that the great sages of the past discovered some of the great eternal truths that were later to become the basis of religion. They called men the children of Immortality and declared emphatically that every soul is potentially divine. They discovered that souls are pure spirits and parts of an all-pervading continuum of spirit called Brahman, that the phenomenon of birth, death and rebirth is an eternal struggle of the spirit to attain liberation from bondage to matter and that the ultimate destiny of all souls is merger with the universal Spirit. They avoided being dogmatic when they proclaimed: 'Truth is one, sages call it by various names'. These truths gave a clear sense of direction and purpose to man. They became the fountain-spring of religion. Thus started the long process of humanizing man. The history of man is the history of the struggle within himself, between the upward pulling force of religion and the downward drag exerted by the dormant raw animal passions. The effects of religion are evident in literature, music, art, sculpture, social and humanitarian institutions, world organizations based on the concept of solidarity of man and so on. Religion is in temporary retreat during the times of war, riots, religious and political persecutions and so on.

Man's quest for an answer to the second question, however, has been a long and tedious one. He patiently accumulated over the ages, knowledge about the external world. But he was still a prisoner of superstitions born out of ignorance. It was only a few centuries ago, when he began to discover and verify the laws of nature by planned experimentation, can it be said that the modern science was born. With each success he became more confident and relentlessly pushed ahead to wrest more and more secrets from nature. The exigencies of the second world war gave a tremendous impetus to the growth of science and technology, so much so that, at the termination of that war, the world found itself in the nuclear age. Science was pushing forward with ever-increasing self-generated momentum and very soon man found himself catapulted into the space age. Distances are annihilated and the continents are brought closer. The pace of history is quickened. The changes are coming faster than man can possibly adjust himself to. Today, science, with such spectacular achievements behind it, is so full of power, either to convert this earth of ours into a land of milk and honey or to snuff out all life from the face of it, that science itself and the entire humanity is in a state of great dismay.

The vast majority of the peoples of the world today are crushed down by poverty, hunger, disease and ignorance. They are impatient to improve their lot and are naturally looking to science and technology to provide them material welfare. The world is in a state of turmoil. We witness everywhere today political, social and racial stresses and strains. Human passions are raising their ugly heads. Religion has become suspect in the eyes of many science-oriented and progress-at-any-cost minded people everywhere.

It is in this general context, therefore, that we have to examine our question. India is a country which is large in size, larger in population and possesses the largest bundle of paradoxes. It has been a home of some of the loftiest philosophies and religions of the world whose influence has affected the lives of nearly a third of the world's population; but, today its people are steeped in superstitions, and have become prisoners of stultifying caste-system, communal bigotry and interlingual jealousies. It has produced a great number of saints and socio-religious reformers; but what we find among the people today are lack of civic sense, lack of social and national purpose, growing corruption at all levels of public life, and social hypocrisy. Once a land known for its fabulous wealth is today a land of one of the lowest *per capita* incomes in the world. A land where 85% of its population is engaged in agriculture cannot produce enough food grains for its own people and is abjectly dependent on imports of this commodity from other countries. It is quite natural, for an educated Indian, therefore, to throw up his arms in utter despair and fall a prey to the temptation of making a scape-goat of religion.

Such faint-hearted educated Indians are of no use to India, for they themselves constitute an additional problem. For such men Swami Vivekananda has the strongest condemnation: 'So long as the millions die in hunger and ignorance,' he said, 'I hold every man a traitor, who, having been educated at their expense, pays not the least heed to them.' 'I claim,' he again said, 'that no destruction of religion is necessary to improve the Hindu (Indian) society, and that this state of society exists not on account of religion, but because religion has not been applied to society as it should have been.' These words, coming as they do from a man who about sixty years ago made a walking pilgrimage across the length and breadth of the country, lived closely with the people of every stratum of society, obtained a first hand estimate of the strength and weakness of the people and who is the greatest apostle of Vedanta of modern times, should prompt every science-oriented Indian to look elsewhere for the causes of India's present problems.

Swami Vivekananda clearly perceived that the unbelievable poverty of the Indian masses is the primary cause of the demoralization of the people, for, poverty dehumanises man; it thwarts his spiritual growth. In unmistakable language he urged for the application of science and technology as the only way to solve the country's material problems.

Therefore, let the Indian scientist not waste his time for fixing the blame for his country's immense problems, for the problems brook no delay. He should, instead, consider it his supreme privilege to have been called upon to render such services to his motherland, which only he, as a scientist in this age of science, is uniquely capable of doing.

He must realize the picture is certainly not a pessimistic one. The country has a vast man-power, the people are intelligent, quick and eager to learn, God-fearing, compassionate and ready to make any sacrifices. The natural resources are considerable. The nation is bountiful though capricious here and there. Whatever be the external diversities, all Indians share a more or less similar philosophy of life born out of a long religious tradition, which constitutes the intangible golden thread of Indian unity. The human and natural resources are so considerable that it passes one's imagination how the country could come to such a sorry state at all. Be that as it may, what the country needs today are more food, more houses, more schools, more hospitals and more industries. These are the very areas where the scientist and the technologist can and should play a vital role in putting the country on proper tracks so that it could roll on to greater and greater strength and prosperity. When the people are fed well, housed well, educated well, provided better health and assured of security and opportunities, caste-system, untouchability, communal bigotry, interlingual jealousies, unhygenic and uncivic habits etc. are very likely to disappear under the weight of prosperity.

The answer to our question, then depends on how much of her spiritual heritage India still retains and how far the Indian scientist and technologist is capable of accomplishing the massive task of his country's modernization without destroying that heritage. There is reason to believe that India still retains much of her heritage. A convincing proof is that during the last hundred years her spiritual soil has produced a bumper crop of great spiritual leaders like Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Tagore, Ramana Maharshi and Sri Aurobindo, the impact of whose greatness reached beyond the borders of the country. India's spiritual soil is still fertile and would continue to produce great leaders in the future too. Moreover the traditions of culture are so deep-rooted in an average Indian that it is extremely doubtful that he will ever give it up under the pressure of modernization. He will certainly give up the dross of superstition and the sooner he does that the better will it be for him. Broad guide-lines for a synthesis of Vedanta and science have already been set by Swami Vivekananda, for all of us to follow. Religion and science will have to converge some-day, because only then, can religion, science and mankind hope to escape common extinction. So, the Indian scientist should bear the broad perspective in his mind and so design his attitudes and actions as to facilitate this historic process, without friction. He must also be aware that whatever happens in India, the home of a seventh of the world's population, is bound to affect the world. It is to be hoped that the Indian scientist will play his role efficiently, intelligently and with full awareness of the course of history.

Let the scientist remember that the true religion is sublime and aims at perfection ; it is selfless love and service. Let him listen to the following words of the great Swami : '. . . may I be born again and again and suffer thousands of miseries so that I may worship the only God that exists, the only God I believe in, the sum total of all souls — and above all my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races, of all species, is the special object of my worship.'

4

M. R. DAS

When science and religion are discussed together, emphasis is often laid on the complementary nature of these two disciplines and their complementary role in the progress and welfare of humanity. It is often thought that the advancements made in these two disciplines, have taken place along entirely different lines, if not in completely opposite directions. One is tempted to do this mainly as a result of a few isolated incidents, as for example, the conflict which arose between Galileo and the Catholic Church, in which certain religious dogmas came into conflict with the scientific truths. On careful examination, it is easily seen that these isolated incidents were negligibly small in number and that these were purely the result of circumstances. And it is not quite justifiable to pose these few isolated instances to support the view that there is not much in common between religion and science.

A closer and deeper analysis of these two disciplines, on the other hand, is capable of revealing some interesting points which show the essential similarity in scientific and religious thought. This is especially true in the case of modern Hinduism. In fact, Swami Vivekananda's exposition of modern Hinduism clearly shows how beautifully scientific many of the Hindu religious concepts are. One could even go a stage further and say that Sri Ramakrishna with his all-embracing love for humanity, demonstrated how practical religion is. In Swami Vivekananda — to use his own words about Śankaracharya — we see tremendous intellectual power, throwing the scorching light of reason upon all the religious beliefs and concepts of Hinduism. In other words, the practicality of Hinduism as demonstrated by Sri Ramakrishna and the logically convincing and intellectually satisfying nature of the Hindu religious philosophy as expounded by Swami Vivekananda certainly give a scientific structure for Hinduism.

Let us examine the veracity of the statement in some more detail. In order to examine the scientific nature of Hinduism let us apply a few criteria that are true of science itself. In this respect I would like to restrict myself to three important criteria. These are, (i) dynamism and growth, (ii) the feasibility of arriving at results starting from fundamentals or reproducibility of results and (iii) ability to stand the test of reason. Before going into the details, I would like to add a few words as regards the third criterion. There has to be necessarily a certain amount of difference in applying this criterion to science and religion, as in one case the subject examines objects and in the other the subject itself is the 'object'. In other words the limit to which the criterion of reasonability can be applied is slightly different in the two cases. This statement necessarily means that there is a limit for this criterion in science also. If one goes deeper in scientific thought, especially in the physical sciences, a stage is reached where one makes certain basic assumptions at the starting point. Theories are worked up based on these assumptions and if reasonable agreement is obtained between the theory thus developed and experiments we justify the validity of the assumptions. Or, the difference in applying the criterion of reasonability in science and religion is not one of kind but one of degree.

Dynamism and Growth

As Hinduism was not founded by one prophet or by one Incarnation of God and as it is not based on the teachings of any one sage, the Hindu religious ideas do not constitute a single system of thought. On the other hand, it is based on the varied spiritual experiences and insights of many ancient and modern sages and reformers. And hence from time to time the Hindu religious thought has got enriched and modified. In fact the spiritual progression has been made with an unerring standard keeping the main trends of thoughts practical and convincing. Again, just as in scientific discipline whenever any idea or practice, which came into vogue as a result of the circumstances of the times, was found unreasonable it was rejected during the course of time. This process is certainly going on even if the pace is slow.

Actually, if one looks into the history of Hinduism starting from the Vedic period through the Sūtra, the Epic, the Puranic and the Dārshanic periods and finally the medieval and modern periods, it is not difficult to see that the Hindu religion is as vigorous and dynamic today as it was during the past periods of growth. The illustrious contributions to Hindu religious thought from Śankara, Ramanuja and Madhva up to Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo show the healthy growth of Hinduism as a dynamic religion.

Reproducibility

Perhaps, the most important criterion that is applied for experimental results in science is checking the reproducibility of a particular observation. Many a time, this aspect is checked from two view points. First of all one examines whether the same method, if followed, will give the same results over and over again. Secondly one tries to follow an alternative path, if possible, and sees whether that too can lead to the observed results. If both these checks give positive results it is assumed that the fact that has been observed is a scientific truth. This particular criterion when applied to religion gives an amazingly positive verdict as regards its scientific nature. The fact that many illumined souls have realized God, independent of the path followed, proves the possibility of realization of God. Perhaps the crowning proof of this truth is the life of Sri Ramakrishna. He was no scholar, in the ordinary sense of the term. Neither had he any book-learning. His knowledge was derived from oral tradition, handed over from past generations. But it was his bold experiments in religion that proved the potential divinity in man and how it is possible to manifest this divinity reaching the goal of evolution. In fact his experiments, not only based on Hinduism but on other religions like Christianity and Mohammedanism also, constitute a synthesis of religions.

Reasonability

As has been mentioned earlier, in order to discuss the 'ability to stand the test of reason', there has to be necessarily a slight difference in the approach between science and religion. Still it is highly rewarding to look at the logicality of the development and the nature of Hindu religious thoughts and concepts. In this respect the contribution of Swami Vivekananda is unparalleled in recent times and it is certainly a unique experience to go through his presentation of facts.

One often thinks of the origin of the disciplines like religion and science. It is easy to pin point the origin of science to intellectual curiosity. Furthermore, this is the basic force behind the development of all fundamental sciences. But it is not purely intellectual curiosity which is the sustaining force of science. Using the knowledge obtained during the pursuit of science man tries to get over his physical limitations. At this point it is interesting to note Swami Vivekananda's words regarding the origin of religion. It is most fascinating to see how scientific his approach is and how closely similar the two disciplines of science and religion are. In his lecture on 'The Necessity of Religion' he says:

> '....To my mind the real germ of religion is the struggle to transcend the limitation of the senses. Man wants to get a glimpse of what there is after the body is dissolved or he desires to understand the power working behind the stupendous phenomenon of nature.... He cannot remain satisfied with his senses; he wants to go beyond them. The explanation need not be mysterious.'

I would now like to discuss a few points in connection with religion, that are usually taken as unscientific. It is interesting to see how far it is valid to say that those points are unscientific.

First, there is the question of blind belief. *Prima facie*, it is certainly unscientific. But one cannot say this categorically unless one is absolutely sure of the context to which the statement is applied. In this respect, it may be said, that any person who has got scientific training will have the least objection in accepting Swami Vivekananda's valid reason for the necessity of faith. In his talk on 'Realization', he says :

> 'All argument and reasoning must be based upon certain perceptions. Without these, there cannot be any argument. Reasoning is the method of comparison between certain facts which we have already perceived. If these perceived facts are not there already, there cannot be any reasoning. If this is true of external phenomena, why should it not be so of the internal ? The chemist takes certain chemicals and certain results are produced. This is a fact ; you see it, sense it, and make that the basis on which to build all your chemical arguments. So with the physicists, so with all other sciences. All knowledge must stand on perception of certain facts, and upon that we have to build our own reasoning.'

He continues :

> 'There are certain religious facts which, as in external science, have to be perceived, and upon them religion will be built. Of course, the extreme claim that you must believe every dogma of a religion is degrading to the human mind.'

Further, it is not in the least unscientific to believe that 'the human mind at certain moments, transcends not only the limitations of senses, but also the power of reasoning. It then comes face to face with facts which it could never have sensed, could never have reasoned out. Of course, we have the right to challenge these facts, to put them to the test of reason.' It is not in the least far-fetched to say that this statement has been valid in the discovery of a few scientific truths too.

A second point is the question of the validity of the law of causation in religion. This question, as is well known is not applicable to religion. No doubt, the logical aspect of the law of causation has helped the progress of science to a great extent. But even in science this is not a criterion that is applied everywhere. When one goes to fundamentals the law of causation is inapplicable even in science. For example if we ask the question why should the fundamental postulates of quantum mechanics be true or what is the reason behind these postulates, there is no known answer. What all we can say is that, as far as the behaviour of sub-atomic particles is concerned, the theory based on these postulates has been found to work well. That is all. Similarly, for questions like why should an electron has a negative charge we cannot give any answer other than that it is found to be so. We call the particle with a charge to mass ratio (e/m) of 1.759 × 107 e.m.u./gm, an electron. No one can give any answer why should the negative charge be there in such a particle or why should this particle be a constituent of all atoms. Thus, when the inapplicability of the law of causation in the context as to what caused the Absolute is voiced, two points come to mind. First why should this law be applied at all as it is not, any way, a universal law ? Secondly, to put the same idea in a slightly different manner, why should one believe more in the law of causation rather than in God ?

Similarly, if we carefully analyse with an unprejudiced mind the various aspects of religion, it is not difficult to reach the conclusion that religion is not something unscientific and outdated. In fact, for the happy future of humanity we need both science and religion. Blind pursuit of science alone can be suicidal. We need a rationalizing force for the proper use of scientific achievement and a balancing power for solving the additional problems created as direct or indirect consequences of the advancement of science. And religion can well be the source of that sublime power. In fact, it is the only source. By religion I don't mean belief in any sectarian dogmas. What is meant is the spiritual force that lights the path of the mind's eye, the power that enables us to have a humanitarian outlook and helps us to consciously work for the betterment of humanity and not for its annihilation. This moral source of compassion and love is certainly a necessity in our troubled times of mutual hatred and suspicion. The importance of this fact has been realized and emphasized by all the great thinkers of the world including men of science like Albert Einstein and Niels Bohr.

In scientific pursuit, it often happens that a person is so engrossed in reaching at the truths—it is, indeed, a joyous experience to find something new which nobody else has found before—that he is not worried about any direct or indirect consequences of his findings on humanity at large. But this moral responsibility of scientists towards humanity is being realized with all its seriousness as is evinced by the views expressed by Linus Pauling and the large number of scientists sharing his views. In this respect India with her spiritual heritage can make valuable contribution to this moral force.

It is certainly a redeeming fact that many influential thinkers, among them Arnold Toynbee and Dr S. Radhakrishnan, consider the possibility of a universal religion. Arnold Toynbee writes :

> 'The four higher religions are four variations of a single theme... If all the four components of this heavenly music of the spheres could be audible on Earth simultaneously, and with equal clarity, to one pair of human ears, the happy hearer would find himself listening, not to a discord, but to a harmony.'

In Dr. Radhakrishnan's words,

> 'Humanity shall remain a united people, where Moslem and Christian, Buddhist and Hindu shall stand together, bound by a common devotion not to something behind but to something ahead, not to a racial past or a geographical unit, but to a great dream of a world society with a universal religion in which the historical faiths are but branches.'

It should be remembered at this point that the religion Sri Ramakrishna lived was not any sectarian religion. It was not mere Puranic Hinduism or Vedism or Vedantism. As he has proved in his life his religion was not even just the entire Hinduism. It was much more. His was a unified universal religion.

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT OF "THE SONG OF THE SANNYASIN"

[We are indebted to the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York, for making available to us the photostat copy of this original manuscript.—*Ed.*]

The original manuscript of Swami Vivekananda's poem "The Song of the Sannyāsin," written in pencil, was accidentally discovered during the spring of 1948. Miss Elizabeth Dutcher's cottage at Thousand Island Park, now known as Vivekananda Cottage, was in the process of being repaired for the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center of New York. A search of the premises had yielded no memento of Swamiji. But a young electrician then engaged in installing electric wiring in the cottage, who often attended services at the Center with his family, noticed on a pile of rubbish thrown outside by workmen an envelope on which were the words "Manuscript of Swami's poem." On looking into it, he sensed the importance of the document but for reasons known only to himself spoke to no one about it for seven years. In September 1955 he brought the manuscript to Swami Nikhilananda in New York and gave it to him.

This valuable document reveals not only something of the process of composition of the poem (from its slow and groping beginning to its effortless flow and impressive conclusion) but also, more importantly, something of what went on in Swamiji’s mind as he wrote it. From a comparison of the typescript reproduction following the facsimile with the published version of the poem it will be found that a number of changes were made subsequent to its composition. Most of these are decided improvements. Only two leave something to be desired. In stanza 10, the words “māyā’s net” in the original seem more characteristic of Swamiji than “māyā’s gates.” And in stanza 11, “then ever be” sounds perhaps more idiomatic than “thou ever be.”

The passage in Bengali characters written in ink at the top of the third page of the manuscript is something Swamiji had been copying out earlier, and has nothing to do with the poem. Below we give the reading of the “Song” as it appears in the manuscript.

Wake up the note, the song that had its birth
far off from where the world could never reach
in mountain caves & glades, of forests deep
whose calm no sigh for lust or wealth or fame
could ever dare break, where rolls the stream
of knowledge truth and bliss that follows both,
sing high that note sanyasin bold say om tat sat om.

Strike off thy fetters. bonds that bind thee down
of shining gold or darker baser ore
Love, hate, good bad and all the dual throng.
Know slave is slave caressed or whipped, not free
for fetters though of gold not cease to bind the less
then off with them sanyasin bold say om tat sat om.

Let darkness go. The will o’ the wisp that leads
with blinking light to pile more gloom on gloom
this thirst for life forever quench; that drags
from birth to death and death to birth the soul.
He conquers all who conquers self Know this.
and never yield, sanyasin bold say om tat sat om

Who sows must reap, they say, and cause must bring
the effect sure good good bad bad and none
escape the law but whoso wears a form
must wear the chain. Too true; but far beyond
both name & form is Atman, Ever free
Know thou art that, sanyasin bold say “om tat sat om”

They know not truth; who dream such vacant dreams
as father mother children wife and friend
the sexless self whose father he whose child?
whose friend whose foe be he who is but one?
The self is all in all none else exists
and thou that art sanyasin bold say om tat sat om.

There is but one, the free, the knower, self
without a name without a form or stain
In Him is maya dreaming all this dream
the witness He appears as nature soul
Know thou that art sanyasin bold say om tat sat om.

Where seekest thou. that freedom friend this world
nor that can give. In books and temples
vain thy search. thy hand thy own but holds
the rope that drags thee on. Then cease lament
let go thy hold sanyasin bold say om tat sat om.

Say peace to all. From me no danger be
to all that live. From those that dwell on high
to those that lowly creep. I am the self of all.
all life both here and there do I renounce
all heavens and earths and hells all hopes and fears
thus cut thy bonds sanyasin bold say “Om! tat sat om”

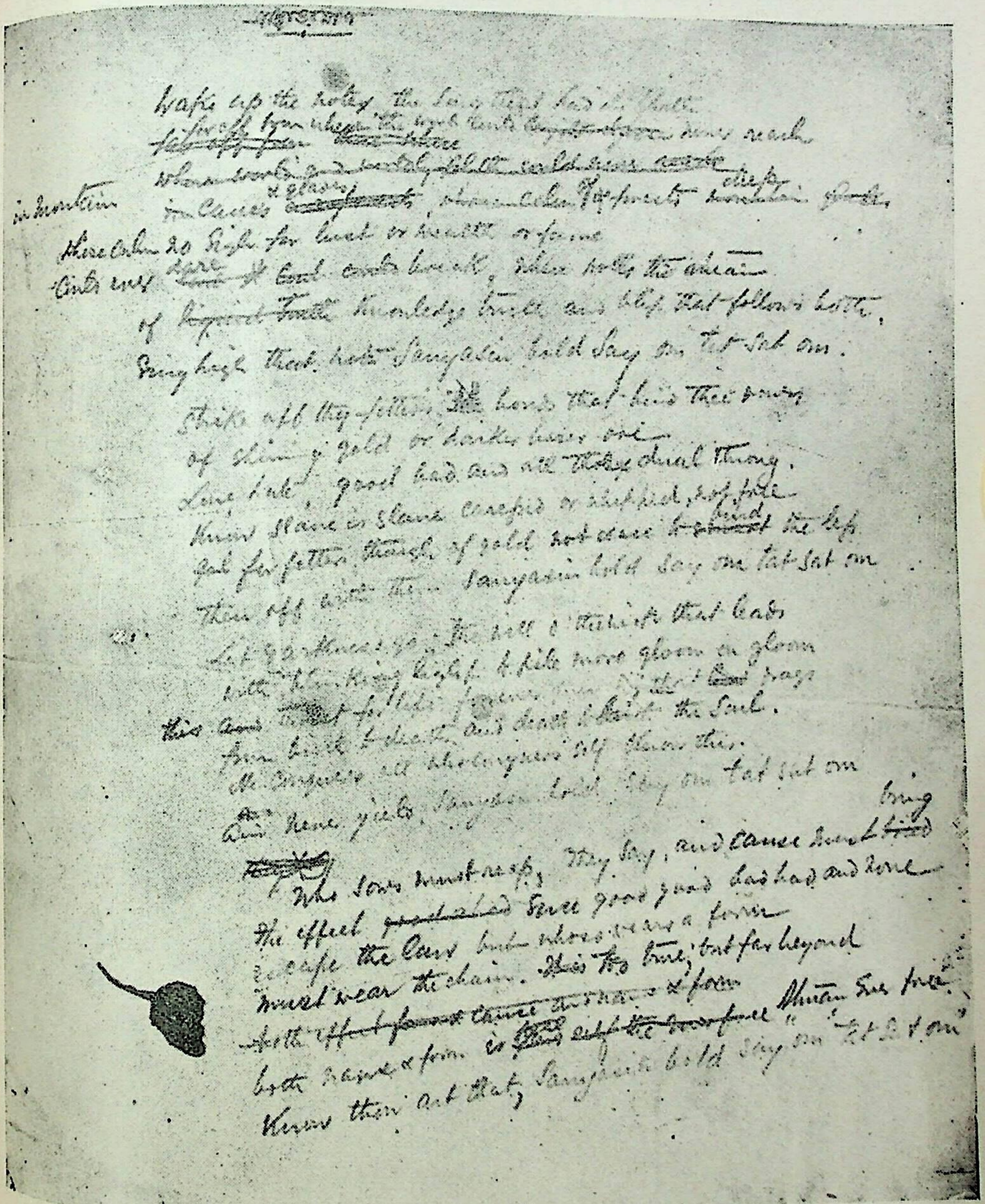
Heed then no more. How body lives or goes
It’s task is done let Karma float it down.
Let one put garlands on, another kick
this frame. Say nought. No praise nor blame can be
When I the praiser I the praised both blamer & the blamed
thus be thou calm sanyasi bold say “om tat sat om”

Truth never comes, where lust and fame & greed
of gain reside. No man who thinks of woman
as his wife can ever perfect be
nor he who owns however little, nor he
whom anger chains can pass through maya’s net
so give these up sanyasin bold say “om tat sat om”

Have then no home. What home can hold thee friend.
the sky thy roof the grass thy bed and food
what chances bring well cooked or ill judge not.
no food nor drink can taint that noble self
which knows itself. the rolling river free
then ever be sanyasin bold say om tat sat om”

few only know, the truth—the rest will hate
and laugh at thee great one but pay no heed
go thou then free from place to place and help
them out of darkness maya’s veil without
the fear of pain or search for pleasure. Go
beyond them both sanyasin bold say “om tat sat om”

thus day to day till Karma's powers spent
release the soul for ever. no more is birth
nor I or thou nor God or man. the I
has become all the all is I and bliss
know. thou art that Sanyasin bold say om tat sat om



~~[illegible]~~

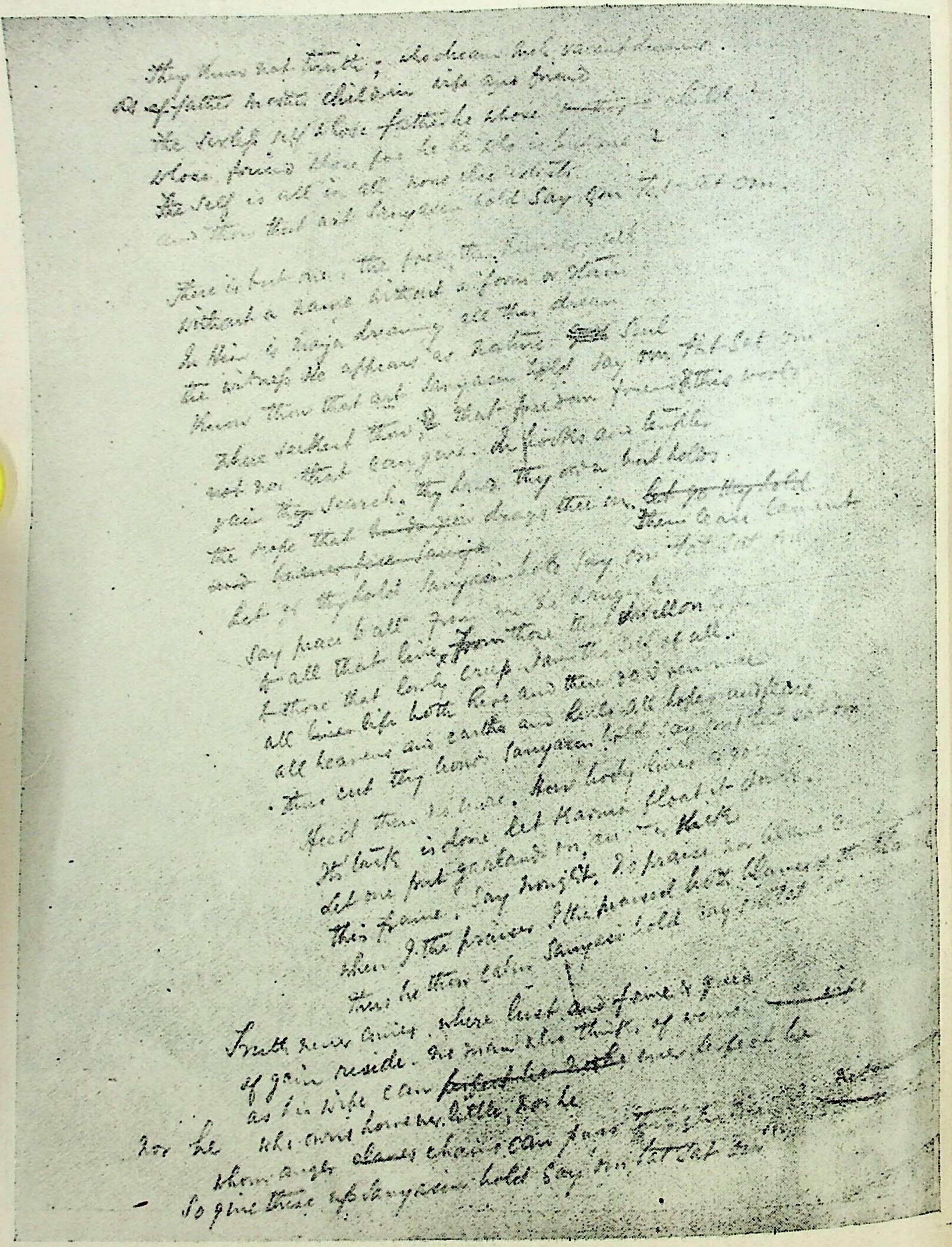
Wake up the note, the song that had its birth
~~far off from~~ far off from where the worldly taint ~~[illegible]~~ never reach
~~where words and worldly filth could never reach~~
in mountain ~~in~~ Caves & glades ~~[illegible]~~ whose calm of forests ~~[illegible]~~ deep ~~[illegible]~~
whose calm no sigh for lust or wealth or fame
could ever dare ~~[illegible]~~ of Gods could break, where rolls the stream
of ~~[illegible] truth~~ knowledge truth and bliss that follows both.
Sing high that note Sanyasin bold Say om Tat Sat om.

Strike off thy fetters, ~~the~~ bonds that bind thee down
of shining gold or darker baser ore
Love hate, good bad and all ~~those~~ dual throng.
Know slave is slave caressed or whipped, not free
for fetters though of gold not cease to ~~[illegible]~~ bind the less
Then off with them Sanyasin bold Say om tat sat om

Let darkness go, the will o' the wisp that leads
with blinking light to pile more gloom on gloom
this ~~and thirst~~ for life forever quench that ~~[illegible]~~ drags
from birth to death and death to birth the soul.
He conquers all who conquers self know this
and never yield Sanyasin bold Say om tat sat om

~~[illegible]~~ Who sows must reap, they say, and cause must ~~bind~~ bring
the effect ~~good and bad~~ sure good good bad bad and none
escape the law but whoso wears a form
must wear the chain. ~~this~~ too true, but far beyond
~~both effect [illegible] cause~~ & name & form Atman ever free.
both name & form is ~~[illegible]~~ ~~[illegible]~~ Sanyasin bold Say om "Tat Sat om"
Know thou art that,

'First Page



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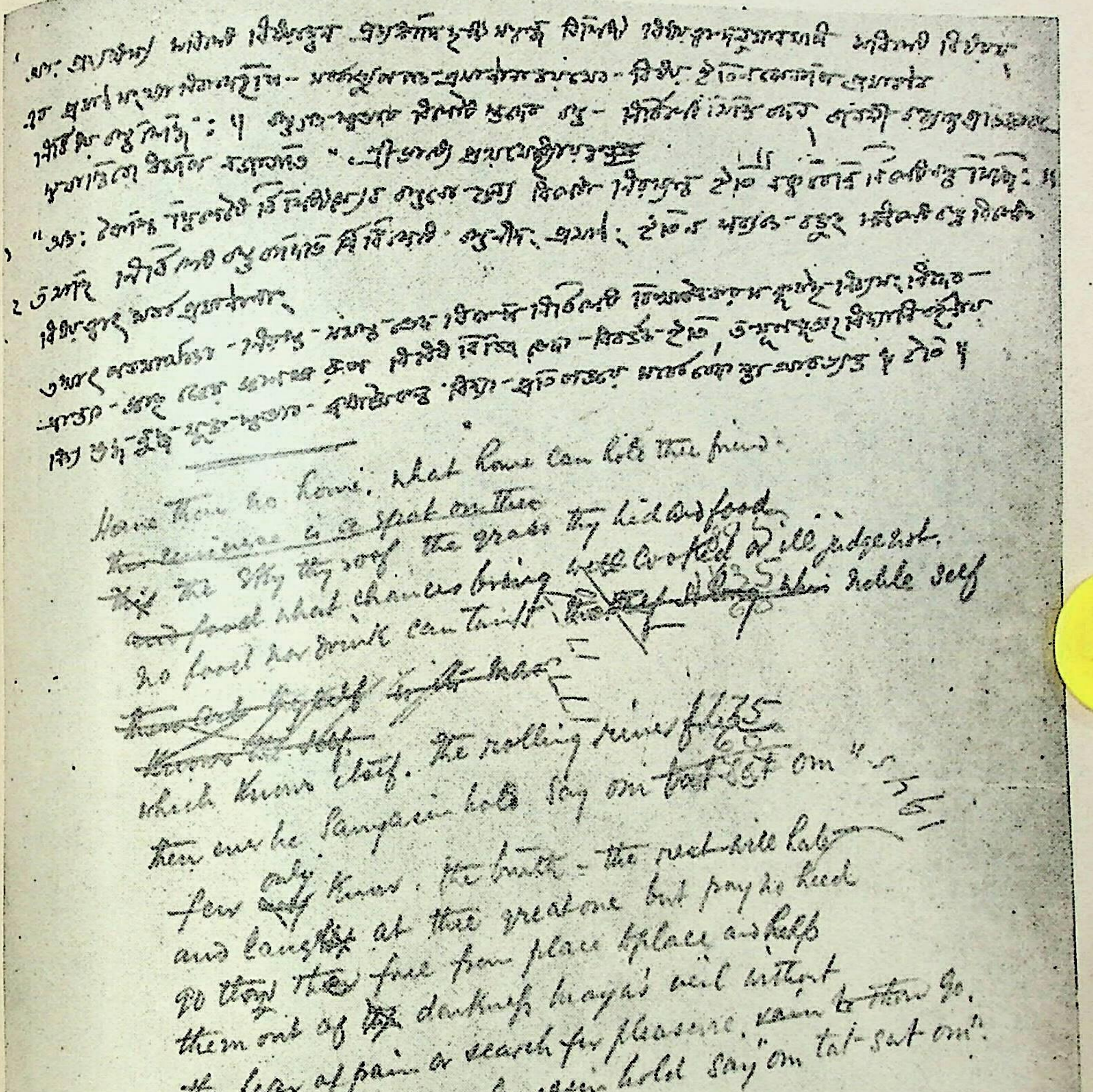
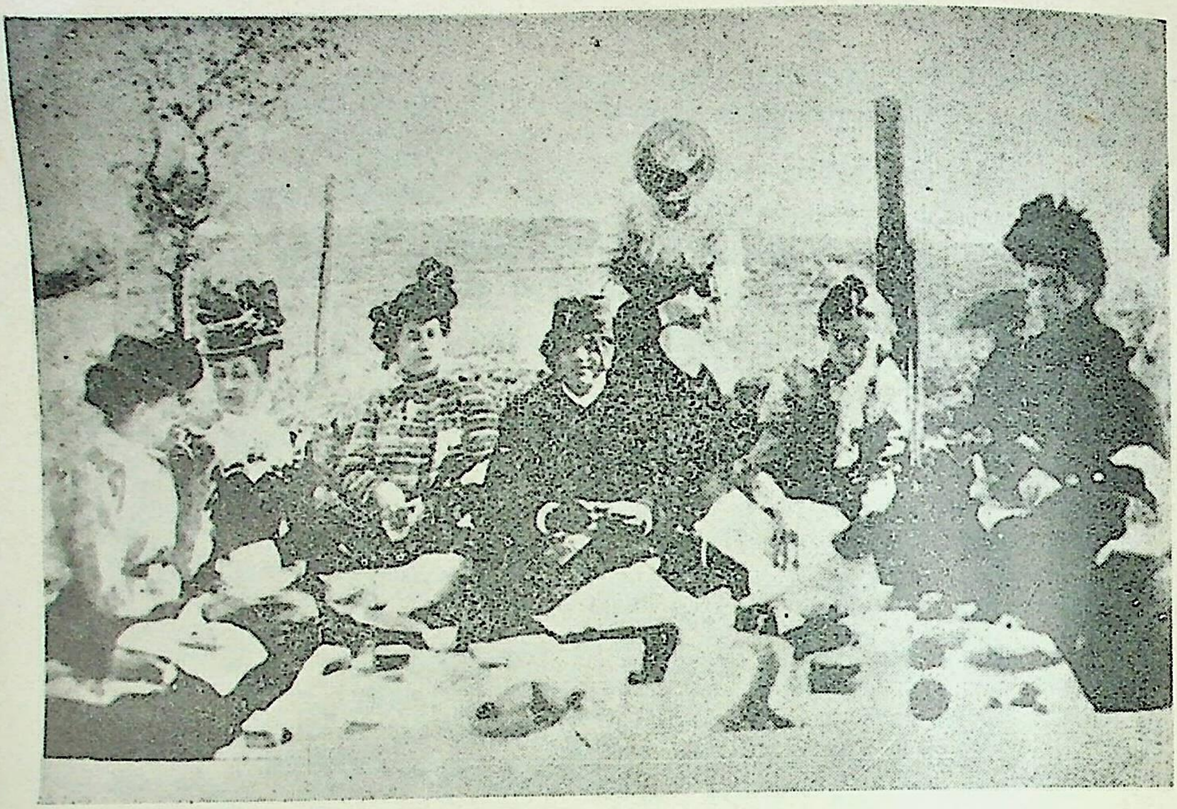


what home can hold thee friend.

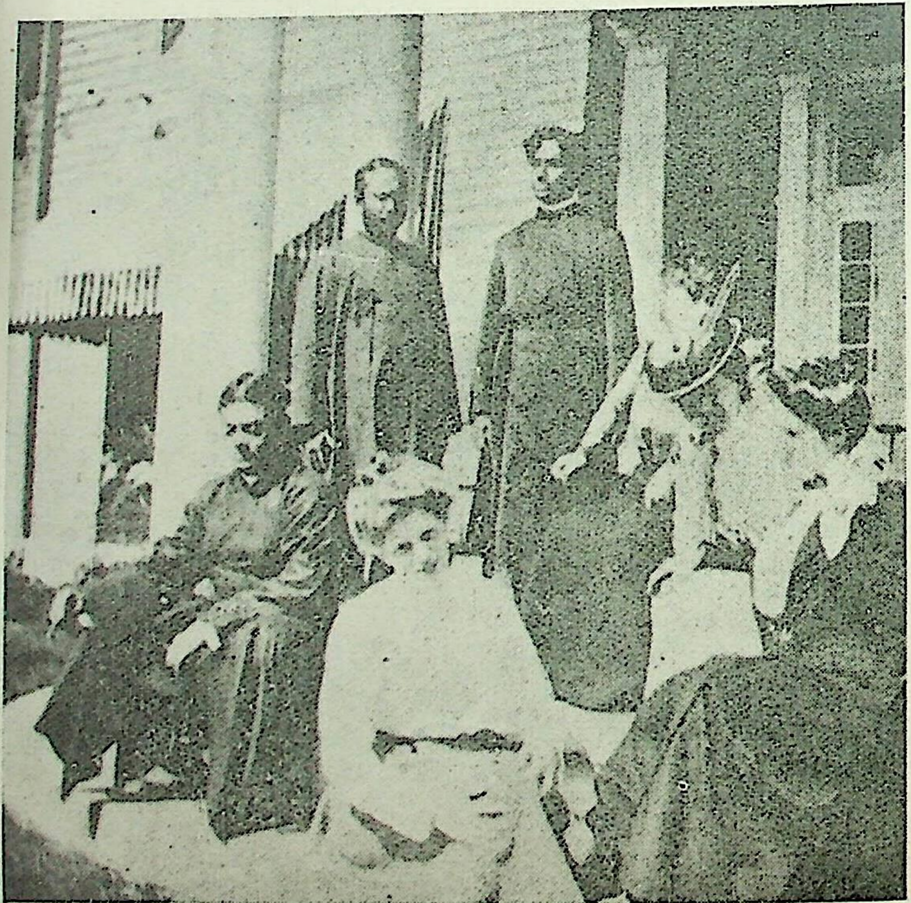
Have thou no home.
~~[illegible] is a spot on the~~
~~thy~~ the sky thy roof the grass thy bed and food
~~and~~ food what chances bring well cooked or ill judge not.
no food nor drink can taint ~~[illegible]~~ that noble self
~~[illegible]~~
~~[illegible]~~
which knows itself. the rolling river free
then ever be Sannyasin bold Say Om ~~[illegible]~~ Sat Om"
few ~~only~~ only know the truth – the rest will hate
and laugh at thee great one but pay no heed
go thou ~~thee~~ free from place to place and help
them out of ~~the~~ darkness Maya's veil without
the fear of pain or search for pleasure. ~~[illegible] to~~ go.
beyond ~~them~~ both Sannyasin bold Say "Om tat-sat om".
Thus day by day till Karma's powers spent
release the soul for ever. no more is birth ~~or death~~
nor I or thou nor God nor man. the I
has become all the all is I ~~and~~ and bliss
Know thou art that – Sannyasin bold Say Om tat-sat om

Third Page



SWAMIJI IN A PICNIC AT PASADENA — 1900

L.-R.: Mrs. Bruce (Sister Ambica); Mrs. Browns; Miss Maclay (Stenographer); Swami Vivekananda; Mrs. Hansborough; Mrs. Wyckoff (Sister Lalita); Mrs. Mary Ryan.



AT
RIDGELY MANOR,
ULSTER COUNTY,
N. Y., IN 1899

Sitting L.–R.:
Swami Vivekananda;
Miss Alberta;
Tantin (Miss MacLeod);
Bettee Legget;
Sister Nivedita.

Standing L.–R.:
Swami Turiyananda;
Swami Abhedananda.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF S. ALEXANDER

S. SUBHASH CHANDRA

The system of philosophy propounded by S. Alexander represents a significant phase of the recent Anglo-Saxon thought. He is regarded as one of the great ones among recent philosophers and his name is bracketed with such outstanding names as those of Bradley and McTaggart and Russel and Moore. A profound thinker, a dedicated educationist, and a zealous humanist, Alexander embodies some of the highest traditions of the Anglo-saxon world. He was the founder of a new system of philosophy, and his whole life was spent in the study and exposition of the subtle and deep intricacies of his own *Weltanschauung*.

Surprisingly enough, very little is known of the life of Alexander. From the meagre biographical information we know that Alexander was born in Sydney, Australia, in 1859. He was an adherent of Judaism. He came to England at the age of 18. The award of a Balliol Scholarship enabled him to continue his university education. Alexander began his career as a teacher of philosophy in the capacity of a Fellow of the Lincoln College, Oxford. Recipient of many awards and distinctions, including the Order of Merit, Alexander was for many years professor of philosophy at the Manchester University. He died in 1938. These were the landmarks of the life of the distinguished philosopher.

The philosophy of S. Alexander is contained in his great work *Space, Time and Deity*. This book, stretching over two bulky volumes, comprises the Gifford Lectures for 1916-18 delivered at the University of Glasgow. This masterpiece of philosophy represents a vital 'ingredient thrown into the fermentation which is now taking place in philosophy,' claims Alexander. *Space, Time and Deity* is verily a modern Odyssey of speculation. This *Magnum Opus* of Alexander possesses that 'architectonic unity' that Schopenhauer regarded as basic to all genuine systems of thought. Encompassing within its turbulent sweep almost every facet of human thought, this great work attempts a daring reconciliation of the time-honoured differences in the world of philosophy. Rightly has Leslie Paul observed :

> Nothing indeed was allowed to escape his (Alexander's) net ; and few more determined efforts have been made in the modern world to end the traditional differences in philosophy through one grand reconciliation. The result is intellectually impressive and the writing has often the warmth and ardour of poetry.[1]

Endowed with a genius for a synthetic and assimilative approach to the problems of philosophy, Alexander devoted his writings to the cultivation of systematic and integrated reflection over philosophical conundrums. Unlike most other Anglo-saxon thinkers, he had nothing against efforts at developing systems of thought. Indeed, he was an ardent advocate of system-making as is proved by the following passage :

> Some suspicion is entertained of system in philosophy, though I can see no good reason for it. This book is at any rate an attempt at system, but its fault in my own eyes is not that it is systematic, but that it is not systematic enough.[2]

Alexander offers us a *Weltanschauung*, and he does not shirk the responsibility in doing so. There is no half-heartedness and no feigned modesty choking the thoughts of Alexander. His writings are invested with a studied assurance free both from the drag of a pretended humility and the weight of an excessive vanity.

Every system of thought, as we know, is rooted in a historical perspective, for philosophy never thrives in a state of isolated intellectuality. The philosophical perspective of Alexander is mainly constituted of the contributions of Darwin, Bergson, and Einstein to the intellectual heritage of mankind. Indeed, the thought of Alexander embodies a rich synthesis of the biological doctrines of evolution and the metaphysical concept of time. Of course, as compared to the more fundamental relevance of the contributions of Bergson and Einstein towards the *Weltanschauung* of Alexander, the impact of Darwin was only on the peripheral level. Alexander was also impressed by the work of Russell, Moore and other realists. A. N. Whitehead was another distinguished figure of the present century who was much admired by him. Bradley, Bosanquet, and other Absolutists were influential factors in so far as they provoked dissent and disagreement.

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[1] Leslie Paul : *The English Philosophers*. London : Faber & Faber, 1953, p. 287.

[2] S. Alexander : *Space, Time and Deity*. London : Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1927, Vol. I, p. XXVI,

In the world of Alexander the twin concepts of Time and Space play a pivotal role. Alexander was convinced that a proper understanding of the truth and reality of Time and Space constituted the key to the solution of all problems of philosophy.

> 'It is not, I believe,' writes Alexander, 'too much to say that all the vital problems of philosophy depend for their solution on the solution of the problem what Space and Time are and more particularly how they are related to each other.'[3]

Space and Time, Alexander believed, are clues to the riddle of reality. To understand what Space and Time are is synonymous to a grasp of all reality.

The core of the Alexanderian contribution is embodied in the doctrine of the inalienable union of Space and Time. According to Alexander, Space and Time are indissolubly linked to each other, nay they are perennially paired together. To separate them from one another is to import artificiality into them. To breach the unity of Time and Space is to contaminate them. This unity is basic to Time and Space. It is their voucher to reality. Divorced from one another they stand sterile and inane, riddled with a surfeit of paradoxes and inconsistencies. Space and Time are fundamentally interdependent. To adduce Alexander:

> There is neither Space without Time nor Time without Space; any more than life exists without a body or a body which can function as a living body exists without life; that Space is in its very nature temporal and Time spatial.[4]

Time insulated from Space would lack continuity. It would be reduced to a fleeting momentariness, an empty instantaneity. We would have succession but no continuity, and Time would consist of a monotonous renewal of moments. 'Instead of a continuous Time, there would be nothing more than an instant, a now, which was perpetually being renewed.'[5] There would be no 'before' and 'after', no past, present, and future. Time would stand denuded of its dimensions. All these and many more contradictions can be removed if we approach Time in the context of Space. Space provides continuity to Time and liberates it from the fetters of bare succession. It serves as a sustaining continuum for Time and provides a foundation for the togetherness of past and present. In the words of Alexander: 'Space supplies us with the second continuum needed to save Time from being mere "now".'[6]

Similarly, Space without Time is also infected with contradictions. If Time without Space is a bare 'now', then Space without Time is a sheer blank, a dead stretch. Time infuses life into Space and saves it from the fate of a mere petrified extension. Space, as we know, is not mere extension, but extension consisting of parts. And this diversity within the unity of Space is not obtainable if Space is envisaged in isolation from Time. Space needs some other continuum to vouchsafe to it its internal diversity. As it is, Time serves as the extra continuum specifying the spatial manifold. In short, the union of Time and Space is perennial and inalienable.

So, then, according to Alexander, we do not have Time *and* Space, but Space-Time, which is the groundwork of all reality. Space-Time is not just the union of Time and Space. It is rather the primordial Unity of which Space and Time are two principal expressions. The kernel of reality, however, is the primeval Unity of Space-Time. Every aspect of reality is grounded in the matrix of Space-Time. Every facet of life is a thriving perspective of Space-Time. Unlike the Absolute of the Monists, Space-Time of Alexander is through and through historical. There is no transcendental immutability in it. It is capable of articulating itself. In fact, all reality is an articulation of Space-Time. Rightly has Alfred P. Stiernotte, a recent interpreter of Alexander, observed : 'Total Space-Time is not a whole, nor is it changeless. It is through and through historical'.[7] Further, Alexander upholds the reality and ontological genuineness of all the varied manifold of existence. All empirical existents are, to use a piquant phrase of Alexander, whirlpools within the ocean of Space-Time. And since Space-Time is the very definition of reality, the whirlpools within it also partake of this reality. To cite Alexander :

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[3] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 35.

[4] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 44.

[5] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 45.

[6] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 46.

> Total Space-Time is thus the synthesis of all perspectives, which is, in fact, only another way of saying that the perspectives are real perspectives of it or are its historical phases.[8]

The whole Space-Time is a continuum. It is in a state of flux. Ceaseless change is a conspicuous facet of it. In fact, this flux is so important that Alexander reckons it as the hallmark of Space-Time. He avers :

> Thus Space-Time is a system of motions, and we might call Space-Time by the name of Motion were it not that motion is in common speech merely the general name for particular motions, whereas Space easily and Time less easily is readily seen to be whole of which spaces and times are fragments.[9]

In the Alexanderian scheme of things, change is the dominant factor of reality. Consequently, the universe which evolves historically from Space-Time is a growing universe. Every aspect of the universe is a growing one. And this growth is propelled by the universal nisus.

The nisus is a distinctive feature of the system of Alexander. It is the moving force, the energising dynamo of evolution. It plays the same role in the philosophy of Alexander as the Will to Live plays in the thought of Schopenhauer and Elan Vital in the system of Bergson. Like the Will to Live and Elan Vital, the nisus coincides with the kernel of creativity. The nisus provides the impulsion required to move the trend of evolution from one landmark to the other overcoming numerous obstacles and trampling upon a multitude of impediments on the tortuous path. The nisus has not only propelled the cycle of evolution to the present stage, but is working even now to ascend even higher evolutionary altitudes. Alexander opines :

> There is a nisus in Space-Time which, as it has borne its creatures forward through matter and life to mind, will bear them forward to some higher level of existence.[10]

The nisus is the restless urge of the nature, a creative agitation yearning and striving for higher and yet higher expressions of the Space-Time.

Propelled by the nisus the evolution proceeds on its cosmic march. The progress of evolution, however, is no mere quantitative multiplication of the already attained forms of existence, but is a march through unexplored and new lands of life. Evolution in the Alexanderian scheme of things is a rising ascent over newly emergent peaks. And each new peak is rendered conspicuous by the emergence of a new quality corresponding to it. According to Alexander :

> The emergence of a new quality from any level of existence means that at that level there comes into being a certain constellation or collocation of the motions belonging to that level, and possessing the quality appropriate to it, and this collocation possesses a new quality distinctive of the higher complex.[11]

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[7] Alfred P. Stiernotte : *God and Space-Time*. New York : Philosophical Library, 1954, p. 52.

[8] S. Alexander : *op. cit.*, Vol. I. p. 80.

[9] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 61.

[10] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 346.

[11] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 45.

It must, however, be understood that every higher level of existence entails no rejection of the lower levels, but is assimilative of all lower levels. In fact, the new emergent quality must perforce base itself upon the qualities of the levels preceding it. Thus, mind is inclusive of the fundamentals of both life and matter in that anybody having mind must have a vital life and a material body and brain. In fact, life and matter may well be described as the foundations of the mind. Same is the case in the relationship between life and matter.

Having dealt with these preliminary features of the Emergent Evolution, we would like to expound in some detail the principal phases of this evolution. But before we do that, we would like to make the following important clarification concerning the relationship between Space and Time. We have already seen that Space-Time is the matrix of all existence, and that Space and Time are the primary expressions of it. Now Alexander, though pleading for their indissoluble union within the Space-Time continuum, upholds in their interrelationship the primacy of Time over Space. He declares :

> Time with its distinctive features corresponds to the three dimensions of Space, and in a manner of speech Time does with its one-dimensional order cover and embrace the three dimensions of Space, and is not additional to them. ... Space, even to be Space, must be temporal.[12]

Space is saturated with Time. Time breathes life into Space and saves it from the state of torpor and immobility. The supremacy of Time over Space is also attested by another significant doctrine of Alexander, which states that Time is to Space what mind is to body.[13] Such a relationship between Time and Space argues for the superiority of the former over the latter as in the Alexanderian hierarchy mind is superior to body.

To end the digression, Space-Time is the Alpha and Omega of existence. Its twin constituents Space and Time are inalienable, though Time is the driving force of Space. Impelled by the nisus, Space-Time continuum translates itself into a hierarchy of emergents. But is this transformation of Space-Time into empirical emergents untrammelled by any restrictions ? Are there no universal factors controlling the shape and form of the emergents ? To this Alexander replies affirmatively. According to him, there are such universal determinants, and he prefers to call them categories. The categories are 'the prerogative characters of things which run through all the rest as the warp on which the others are woven'.[14] Every aspect of reality bears the hallmark of these categories. Substance, diversity, magnitude and number are some of the prominent categories of existence. It is neither possible nor necessary to enlarge upon these categories here. A little reflection will suffice to prove that these categories are truly universal and pervasive, and that no matter what the level of existence may be these categories are invariably present. These categories are palpable at the levels of mind, life and matter, and presumably they will be present at the level of the deity too. These categories, though pervasive, are not wholly immutable. They are capable of change in terms of the ruling conditions and prevailing circumstances. These variations of categories have been described by Alexander as primary qualities as against the secondary qualities, which are inclusive not only of all the traditional secondary qualities handed over since the days of John Locke but also matter, life, mind, and deity.

To turn now to various levels of evolution, let us first discuss what matter connotes in the Alexanderian scheme of things. Matter itself is preceded by the level of motion, and Alexander candidly disavows any knowledge of the way in which motion is carried to the stage of matter. He is convinced that several, to us indistinct, levels must have intervened on the passage from motion to matter. But what exactly these levels were Alexander is unable to say. Further, even matter is not as simple a proposition as it seems to be. There are grades of materiality and it is difficult to trace one grade to another with any degree of certitude. Thus between chemical matter and the physical one exists a big and inexplicable hiatus. Anyhow, Alexander postulated matter as the first stage in the process of evolution.

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[12] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 59.
[13] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 38.
[14] *Ibid.*, Vol. I, p. 186.

After matter emerges life. Life is the result of a certain complicated arrangement of the psycho-physical matter. But a mere organisation or an ordering of matter alone will not suffice to produce life. The emergence of something unknown and wholly new is to be expected and accepted with natural piety. Life is rooted in matter ; but its roots alone are inadequate to enable it to blossom forth. Life needs the inexplicable touch of emergence to water its roots of materiality. 'Life is not an epiphenomenon of matter but an emergent from it,' writes Alexander.[15] In other words, life is matter plus something inexplicably, almost esoterically, new. But, though inexplicable, the enigma of the emergence of life is not unintelligible. The continuity between matter and life is not impossible and the chasm is not an unbridgeable one. Because, matter, though not alive, is animated by time ; and this rescues matter from lifelessness. Time is the life principle in matter. Alexander asserts,

> Though matter has no life, it has something which plays in it the part which life plays in the living organism and mind plays in the person ; and even on the lowest level of existence, any motion has its soul, which is time. Thus matter is not merely dead as if there was nothing in it akin to life. It is only dead in that it is not alive as organisms are.[16]

In this manner the basic continuity between life and matter is assured.

Mind is the third landmark of the Alexanderian evolution. Mind is rooted in the life level (or neural level) just as life stems from the material level. But just as life is no epiphenomenon of matter so also mind is no epiphenomenon of life. Mind is no mere complication or an intricate collocation of neural processes, though the physiological processes are indispensable to its functioning. Mind has no existence without brain, but it is also not just brain. Mind signifies the emergence of something wholly new, something that is no mere dusty repetition of earlier forms of existence.

> Mental process is therefore something new, a fresh creation, which, despite the possibility of resolving it into physiological terms, means the presence of so specific a physiological constitution as to separate it from simpler vital processes.[17]

Mind denotes a momentous departure from the old beaten tracks to fresh avenues and pastures new. It constitutes a standing proof of the force of the gigantic nisus activating the whole universe. It constitutes the richness and exuberant novelty of life. In brief, it, like the earlier landmarks, introduces a new and enriching factor into the colossal complex of the universe.

Now we come to the apogee of the Alexanderian evolution, viz., the deity. The deity is the next higher stage to mind. It belongs to the future and not to the past or the present. It is an aspiration, a hope, and an ideality and not an actuality. 'Deity is some quality not realized but in process of realization, is future and not present.'[18] The world is ever striving towards deity, but never attaining it. Deity occupies a unique place in the philosophy of Alexander. It always belongs to the future. It is the fullest embodiment of the nisus. Though in his plan of exposition Alexander has placed deity after the level of mind, yet in truth the deity is ever present as a looming possibility right from the beginning. In fact, every impending level of existence functions as deity to the already attained form of existence. In the words of Alexander :

> While for us men deity is the next higher empirical quality to mind, the description of deity is perfectly general. For any level of existence, deity is the next higher empirical quality, and as the world grows in time, deity changes with it. On each level a new quality looms ahead, awfully, which plays to it the part of deity. For us who

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[15] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 64.

[16] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 67.

[17] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 7.

[18] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 379.

> live upon the level of mind deity is, we can but say, deity. To creatures upon the level of life, deity is still the quality in front, but to us who come later this quality has been revealed as mind. For creatures who possessed only the primary qualities, — mere empirical configurations of space-time, — deity was what afterwards appeared as materiality, and their God was matter .... On each level of finite creatures deity is for them some 'unknown' (though not 'unexperienced') quality in front, the real nature of which is enjoyed by the creatures of the next level.[19]

Deity, then, is the characteristic expression of the universal nisus. It is the ever receding goal and never-to-be-attained ideal. The moment what was previously regarded as deity is attained, it ceases to be deity. It belongs to the crux of the deity that it should always remain in the future, and when the future drifts to the present then the existence attained ceases to be the ideal and, therefore, also ceases to be deity. The deity is always spread across the horizon of yearned-for possibilities. But deity as such is never realized. If realized, then it ceases to be deity.

> The world in its infinity tends towards infinite deity, or is pregnant with it, but that infinite deity does not exist; and we may add that if it did, God — the actual world possessing infinite deity — would cease to be infinite God and break up into a multiplicity of finite gods, which would be merely a higher race of creatures than ourselves with a God beyond.[20]

We now find that Alexander has arrived at the astonishing result that deity does not exist at all. All that exists is the nisus towards deity. God is never actual and existing. He is always the embodiment of the hopes and aspirations. Rightly has Alfred P. Stiernotte observed :

> In actuality, therefore, Alexander admits that deity attained does not exist, however much he has used the conception of deity in most of his argumentations, but what does actually exist is the nisus to deity.[21]

It should, however, be understood that the 'deity does not exist' doctrine of Alexander does not imply that the deity is an illusion. Deity is real : it belongs to the province of reality, only the reality here is an ideal one. All that Alexander has said is : 'Deity is a nisus and not an accomplishment.'[22] But nisus is no unreality. On the contrary, it is the most powerful factor in the Space-Time continuum. Upon it hinges the very burden of evolution. Hence, deity, though not actual, is not illusory.

With this, we complete our elucidation of the groundworks of the philosophy of Alexander. A work of this nature has naturally provoked a prodigious amount of comment and criticism. Very often the approach to the contributions of Alexander has been based upon either unqualified appreciation or a total repudiation of all that he has written. Serious criticism, however, has not been wholly absent. The main body of criticism has centred around the method of approach and the use made of the concept of emergence. Many critics have opined that there is more of poetry and less of philosophy in the *Space, Time and Deity*. Thus, Passmore has described the book of Alexander as

> more like a work of literature than a philosophy. We expect from the philosopher a running thread of argument, interspersed with polemics. But there is very little of this in Alexander; he simply puts a hypothesis before us and then tells us to look and see how reasonable it all is, how admirably it squares with our experience.[23]

Further, it has also been pointed out, the concepts of emergence and continuity are discordant.[24] It is also justly pointed out that Alexander makes an all too metaphysical use of the biological doctrine of evolution. Aside from these more or less well-known criticisms, we would like to make the following critical observations on the thought of Alexander. Our first criticism is that the nisus is a myth. There is no evidence for its existence. The nisus of

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[19] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, 348.

[20] *Ibid.*, Vol. II. p. 365.

[21] Alfred P. Stiernotte, *op. cit.*, p. 165.

[22] S. Alexander : *op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 364.

[23] John Passmore : *A Hundred Years of Philosophy*. London : Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd., 1957, p. 267.

[24] S. Radhakrishnan and others (ed.) *History of Philosophy, Eastern and Western*. London : George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1953, Vol. II, p. 364.

Alexander is really the Will of Schopenhauer divested of its blind barbarity. But we can see no reason for this attempt at freeing the Will from its barbarity. There is no ground for supposing that the evolution of the world has been guided by any intrinsic predisposition to develop. If there had been any nisus at all, then the evolution of the world would have been less chaotic than it has been. The nisus is an anthropocentric conception. It is choked with wishfulness. It gratuitously introduces the human element in the essentially non-human character of evolution. Secondly, the concept of emergence is really founded upon a metaphor. The theory of emergency is really based upon the conception of the evolution as if it were a staircase. This 'staircase' conception of evolution (Lloyd Morgan preferred to call it the 'pyramidal' conception) is unwarranted. Thirdly, the view that evolution at certain stages reaches certain landmarks and that each new landmark is characterised by a distinctive course of development requires a sturdier foundation than the one contained in the writings of Alexander. Indeed, Alexander hardly offers any grounds for espousing this doctrine. He regards it as self-evident. We fail to see how this theory could be self-evident. It is certainly not self-evident in the same sense in which it is self-evident that all buffalos are black or that the three angles of a triangle (Euclid's triangle) are equal to two right angles. In our opinion, there is no reason why the universe should not have unfolded itself in gradual and quantitative stages. Indeed, the history of the biological evolution testifies to such a gradual evolution. Fourthly, the landmarks of the evolution of Alexander are arbitrary. They are not borne out by any objective evidence. The classification of the history of evolution into stages like matter, life, mind and deity is anthropocentric. Fifthly, the theory of emergent evolution canvasses the primacy of Time over Space. We fail to see the reason for this primacy. Alexander no doubt holds that Space and Time are indispensable to each other. But if that were true, then, one may well ask, why should Time preponderate over Space? It does not suffice merely to refer to their relationship as one of body and soul. The body and soul argument, after all, is a mere metaphor. It is no proof.

In spite of these faults, the contribution of Alexander to the philosophical heritage of mankind is undoubtedly of great value. His writings constitute an important milestone in the history of recent philosophy. With his characteristically broad and encompassing sweep of speculation Alexander had touched and tried several momentous problems of philosophy. His work was invariably marked by an originality of approach and prodigious powers of thinking. In short, all his writings go to justify the following tribute of Lloyd Morgan:

> The most resolute attempt to give a philosophic interpretation of nature as a whole, with adequate stress on the concept of emergence, is that of Professor S. Alexander in *Space, Time and Deity*.[25]

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[25] C. Lloyd Morgan: *Emergent Evolution*, p. 9.

The language and the thought and everything of the Upanishads come direct, they fall upon you like a sword-blade, strong as the blows of a hammer they come. There is no mistaking their meanings. Every tone of that music is firm and produces its full effect; no gyrations, no mad words, no intricacies in which the brain is lost. No signs of degradation are there — no attempts at too much allegorising, too much piling of adjectives after adjectives, making it more and more intricate, till the whole of the sense is lost, and the brain becomes giddy, and man does not know his way out from the maze of that literature.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

RELIGION FOR THE COMMON MAN

D. K. BANERJEE

Religion in a wider sense is a mode of conduct meant for a better life — it preaches certain principles formulated with a view to basically changing human mind from an inferior to a superior state of being. To quote Mr. W. T. Stace from his *Religion and the Modern Mind*: 'No one would deny that religions and moral ideas are of vital importance in a culture. It will be helpful to begin by regarding the religious view of the world not as a set of intellectual propositions about the nature of the world but as importing *a way of life*.' Dr. S. Radhakrishnan says, 'To do justly, to love beauty and to walk humbly with the spirit of truth is the highest religion.' Kant said, 'Religion is the recognition of all our duties as divine commands.' Mr. William James says, 'In the widest possible sense man's religion is the belief that there is an unseen order and that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting ourselves thereto.'

Again Morality and Religion are inseparably correlated or 'grow into an indissoluble unity.' Moral conduct is based on religious belief whilst religious concepts come from moral advances.

It would perhaps not be untrue to say that we are nowadays living in an age where 'happiness is but an occasional episode in the general drama of pain.' We are lagging far behind of what we ought to be morally, physically and mentally. The qualities which differentiate rationality from animality are unfortunately found to be somewhat lacking in many of us. Love, sincerity, cordiality, sympathy and hospitality are nowadays becoming things of the past. The influence of ultra-modern civilization has so deeply gained grounds in our minds that we are leading a life which is in a way rather artificial, abnormal and highly exciting in character. As a result of this man has become a sort of machine with speed as its main food. Life and laughter, joy and zeal are now replaced by serious thoughts and problems, strain and tension of the nerves which have resulted in diseases of the head and heart.

These strains and tensions which at times take the shape of a nightmare, could perhaps find no scope for their presence had there been a little more fellow-feeling, sympathy or understanding among us with a frame of mind which is not entirely individualistic but a little socialistic in character.

To quote Dr. S. Radhakrishnan from his *Religion and Society*, 'the world is rent by misunderstandings, bitterness and strife. Every civilization is the expression of a religion, for religion signifies faith in absolute values and a *way of life* to release them. If we do not have a conviction that the values a civilization embodies are absolute, its rules will become dead letters and its institutions will decay.' He also says, 'if we are not kind to one another, if all our attempts to bring peace on earth have failed, it is because there are obstacles, malicious, selfish and wicked in the heart and mind of man which our way of life does not check.'

The so-called educated intelligentsia of our time would do better to inculcate for a short while in their minds the fundamental pre-requisites to a happy and peaceful life. Voices may be raised by the present generation whose blood is yet hot that we have every right to live better, do better in our own way with all our might or right. Certainly! We have it, but let us also learn how to cast a moment's glance at those who are known as the 'have-nots' of the society, whose trials and tribulations have no end. Those unfortunate persons who have no education — no knowledge or strength, no money or dress — those who are looked down as the bane of the society.

Humanity demands that we should not become selfish to the extent of not paying any heed to the cry of a diseased person or to the wail of a widowed mother, in tattered cloth with a hungry child in her arms, or a helpless orphan looking around for help but has no language for expression. We should not forget that it is by sympathy to the poor that one's greatness is augmented and not by the refusal of it. Our sympathy does not cost us anything. Let, therefore, a spirit that prompts us to say, 'I will also contribute my little mite to this great cause of humanity,' grow among us. This service to humanity was one of the main objects of Swami Vivekananda's teachings.

This little contribution of mite from every single individual would make a mighty ocean of strength, whch will one day have no difficulty in removing the giant rock of frustration or failure. Acharya Vinoba Bhave says, 'Independence is of no value if the downtrodden and illiterates are not lifted up. Strength of a well-organized, disciplined population is a vital force behind any real prosperity of a nation.' In Vinobaji's Sarvodaya thought the lowest get the highest attention.

Our country unfortunately possesses a fair number of the so-called 'enlightened ultra-moderns' who have well-imitated the worst of Western civilization but not the best of it. They do not care for their heredity, identity or ideality, rather they hate those who cannot fit themselves into the same pattern as theirs. They feel proud, dreaming in a foreign way and condemning the 'have-nots' of the society. But does it not remind us of the story of 'a crow with the peacock feathers stuck into its tail'?

We should not forget that our great Indian culture has shown to the world what is 'sacrifice with the spirit of love'. Our history has revealed how a prince like Lord Buddha or a Saint like Chaitanya Dev sacrificed all their worldly pleasures and comforts for the well-being of humanity. How severe and austere a life Sri Ramakrishna led for the good of all people! His life and teachings no doubt have set bright examples to all generations, present or future.

Nowhere in the history of the world had there been such a big galaxy of saints and prophets as there was in India. 'To estalish religion and to destroy evil' were they born and that was their common purpose.

Religion is something which moulds the mind, educates it and broadens the outlook of an individual. It is said by one of our great saints that 'in this Kaliyuga truth is austerity'. But how many of us stick to the path of truth? If we can only train our minds to be true, honest and sincere which religion is basically trying to teach, that itself will clear our path to further understanding. However, let not religion be treated as an instrument to fulfil our motives, whether they are political, social or economic. For there cannot be any religion where there is hypocrisy, where there is no manifestation of human qualities. Rites and sacrifices avail nothing if the mind is given to base desires.

A human being can become a master of himself if he really has the eagerness, firmness or seriousness to improve his own self. But in trying to do so, we should not forget certain fundamental necessities which are of no less value. Control over the tongue and temper is one such important quality worth acquiring. A lot of our mishaps, miseries and tragedies could have been easily averted if we would only try to learn this valuable art. It is the slip of a tongue which might even cause the death of a person. It is the lack of control over the temper which might lead to the murder of a person, — a subsequent repentence of which may not be of any value. Life would have been much more enjoyable and peaceful had we for a moment thought what we are saying or what we are doing, what do we gain by such an action or what do we lose by it, etc. Training of the mind is, therefore, of the utmost importance. What good can a big charity do to a person whose mind is basically polluted? His charity is not a sacrifice, it is a means to an end. This is the point to be thought of seriously in a quiet unagitated manner by any individual. Tolerance is a basic quality of great value which we as a nation could boast to possess. But this quality is also gradually fading out owing to perhaps too much of modernism. It should not however be forgotten that this spirit of tolerance alone can save us from many a misdeed and unhappiness.

Rabindranath Tagore said, 'We can never go beyond man in all that we know and feel.' It is therefore essential that human consciousness should develop. This gradually deepens and widens the realization of the immortal being, the perfect, the eternal. Man can realize God after having reached a stage of perfection whether through love or other means.

To quote Tagore again, 'The man whose inner vision is bathed in an illumination of his consciousness at once realizes the spiritual unity reigning supreme over all differences. He realizes that peace is the inner harmony which dwells in truth. He knows that beauty carries an eternal assurance of our spiritual relationship to reality, which waits for its perfection in the response of our love.' In brief, to be humane, and morally perfect is the first step in religion and that is the religion for the common man.

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

1883. 'Once he* went to see Keshav Babu at his residence. He was then ailing. When Keshav heard that the Master had come he came downstairs. Seeing him the Master said, "This time I fail to understand Mother's will." Keshav Babu passed away in a few months. Another time when he had been ailing the Master had vowed green coconut and sugar to Mother Siddheswari and Keshav Babu got over, and the Master had fulfilled his vow.'

'Members of Vijaybabu's and Keshav Babu's parties once went to Mani Mullick's residence (for celebration?). There the Master came to know of Keshav's serious illness. Hearing about it the Master became sad and serious and did not join in singing or dancing. How he loved Keshav Babu! Whenever Keshav Babu came to the Master he used to sit in front of him with folded hands. What deep faith he had in the Master's words!'

In *Sat-katha* many things about Keshav Chandra Sen have been narrated, so we desist from repeating them here.

We have heard that the Master used to visit, in the company of Lātu, Sri Jaygopal Sen's house. We have not heard much about Sri Sen from the lips of Lātu Maharaj, except that during the summer he used to send for the Master and the devotees iced *sharbet* of water melon, *bel* fruit, and ice-cream. Sometimes he would send such large quantities of these things that even after the devotees had partaken, there used to remain a good quantity. This he would send to the devotee Navakumar Chatterji at the village of Dakshineswar.

'Will you be surprised to hear that the Master took Baburam, Rāmalāldā, and myself to the Dakshineswar village to witness an open theatrical performance? It was in the house of a devotee. The proprietor and the actors of the party were all good people. They held the Master in veneration. Next day they paid a visit to the Master at the temple garden and regaled him with a number of devotional songs. Master was exceedingly glad and said, "When you have composed songs of such fervent devotion, you have nothing to fear, your austerity has borne fruit." And Master asked Ramalal to write down the songs.' To whom Lātu Maharaj referred as the proprietor of the party it is difficult for us to guess. Maybe he referred to Nilkantha. He told us about another theatrical party : "Look here. On a Kali Puja night one theatrical party gave a performance. I sat up throughout the night. So did the Master. The theme was of a wonderful lover who loved his beloved so dearly that he himself dug a tunnel from his own room to that of hers. Look at the intensity of that love! Did not our Master say 'You will see God when the intensities of the three kinds of love will combine into one.'"

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* Sri Ramakrishna.

One devotee intervened and said, 'What are those three, Maharaj?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'One : A man's love for his beloved; two : parents' love for their children; three : a drunkard's love for the drink.' (*The Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna*, however, enumerates the third as 'a worldly man's love for his possessions.')

'Ramababu purchased a garden near Calcutta to convert it into a hermitage. One day the Master took us there. The road was too bad for a carriage. So the Master walked the distance. He met a *sādhu* on the road and started talking with him for a long time. We became impatient, some went there to call him back. Then the Master came to Ramababu's garden by way of the sadhu's hermitage. Ramababu had planted a circle of basil plants, seeing which the Master was very pleased and said, "Ram, it is a fine place for meditation. Come often and meditate here." That day Ramababu entertained the Master and the devotees with sweets and fruits — fresh and dry. From there the Master went to Suresh Mitra's garden. There we very often went, and Sri Mitra used to have parties of devotional singers.

'From there the Master went to Ishān's (Ishan Chandra Mukherji) house. At that time there was an assembly of pandits. Many composed funny Sanskrit couplets. Once there was a peal of laughter. Master said, "What's going on there? Let us too share your joy." At this one of them explained the last couplet, whose purport was poverty was the greatest joy-killer. Another explained the same couplet as "The thought of God is the highest thought." Ishānbabu enjoyed feeding the Master with a large number of side dishes, — once with a variety of pickles.'

'Once I accompanied the Master to Ishān's where Pandit Śaśadhar (Tarkachudamani) was staying. He asked the Pandit if he had been commissioned by the Lord to preach. Further he said that without the Lord's command nobody could preach Him, and that people would not pay any heed to the person's words who was not so commissioned. The Pandit kept mum. In a few days the Pandit paid a return visit to Dakshineswar. Since then he used to visit the Master at Dakshineswar and Calcutta. Once Ishān spent some time at Bhātpara exclusively in prayer, counting beads, etc. and came direct from there to Dakshineswar. The Master seeing him remarked : "Hello Ishān, mind must get purified first, when that is done it takes but little time to get purification of the body, and when both are achieved austerities become effective. If you fail to effect both simultaneously your austerities will be half-hearted."'

Once a devotee purchased something at an unusually high price for Lātu Maharaj. At that Lātu Maharaj narrated an incident from Jogin Maharaj's life. 'The Master asked Brother Jogin to purchase an iron vessel for cooking, which Jogin readily did. When the Master examined it, it was found to have a crack. At that he said to Jogin "What is this? When you pay for a thing will you not examine it properly? You must see if it is in order, if its weight is proper; and in the case of a thing for which the seller, when asked, makes an extra allowance you should not forget to ask for that also. The seller is there in the market not to earn merit but to get as much for his commodities as he can. So you must enquire in several shops to know the price of the article. You will, no doubt become a *sadhu*, but is it any reason that you will have to be a fool as well?" Our Master was a *Paramahamsa*, prince among the sadhus. But look how he instructs! He was perfect in everything. You are a house-holder, you are to maintain a family. Should you spend so much on me, a *sadhu*? It is mere waste. Do I need such things and in large measures?'

About Jogin Maharaj (Swami Yogananda) Lātu Maharaj narrated another incident, which we presume, occurred during this time. So we incorporate it in this chapter.

'One day a gentleman abused the Master in the presence of Jogin Maharaj who said nothing. You know there comes a time in everyone's life during his spiritual practices, when he cannot oppose anybody nor criticize any, far less quarrel or fight. Jogin was in that state. So though it pained him he kept quiet. The Master also knew Jogin's state. But in order to teach us how to behave under such circumstances, would you believe what he said? "Jogin, how strange it is! The fellow abused me right and left and you did not say a thing to him! Do you know what the scriptures say about it? If you are able you should inflict physical punishment on one who abuses your *Guru*; if you are unable to do so you should leave the place forthwith." Jogin sat pondering over it.'

In this connection Lātu Maharaj narrated another incident that occurred at Dakshineswar, but it did not concern Jogin Maharaj. We are inserting it here in order to show how the Master's instructions differed with different persons. The incident is about Niranjan Maharaj. 'Niranjan was in a boat. The moment he heard a few passengers speaking ill of the Master he started rocking the boat rather violently. The passengers got terrified. The critics stopped their criticism in fear. Niranjan also calmed down. When he came to Dakshineswar, he narrated the incident. The Master got annoyed with Niranjan and said, "Fool, you were about to drown them all! What is this? Anger rising so high as that? Maybe, one or two, criticized me. But what had the others done that you were going to punish them *en masse*? Did you think what would have been the condition of all the passengers had the boat sunk? Beware! never do such things again. What kind of justice is this—to punish twenty for the fault of one?" Niranjan's eyes were wet.'

A similar incident happened, not at Dakshineswar but at Naren's Calcutta house. We heard it from Lātu Maharaj's lips at Balaram's house. We record it here as it was an incident of this period of Lātu Maharaj's life.

'An advocate called the Master an "idiot". Naren was not a boy to let the matter go. There ensued a heated debate. But the man would not yield to arguments. Then Naren laughed and said, "Well sir, he is but an illiterate villager. What wonder is there that to you he would appear as an idiot?" At this the advocate laughed and departed. When he went away I said to Naren, "How now, Lorenbabu; how could you pocket the insult? Such irreverent words he applied to the Master and you bore them away?" At this Naren smiled and said, "Don't you understand? To contradict him was to waste our valuable time. I agreed and the fellow went away satisfied. Why waste our breath in arguing with one who is spiritually a blank? You know how I revere the Master. You know my mind well." I, however, remained unconvinced and went on revolving it in my mind, "How could Lorenbabu give his assent to that?" Loren understood what was going on in my mind and said, "Brother, don't be angry with me. I will never act as that before you."'

'At Dakshineswar Jogin was entrusted with keeping Mother Kali's *prasād* (consecrated food) for the devotees. One day it was late and the prasād was not sent to the Master's room. So he himself went to the manager to inquire about it. At this Jogin thought, "He has not been able, I see, to transcend the habits of a priest — to get a portion of the consecrated food." When Jogin was thus musing within himself what do you think the Master, who knew the innermost thoughts and feelings of all, told him? "Look here, my boy, Rāsmani has left such a huge property for this temple with the idea that *sādhus* and devotees of the Lord will be maintained with it. What ever little comes here serves her purpose. The rest is taken by others for their mistresses. When devotees like you, who come here, take a portion of the *prasād* that bears merits to the Rani." '

'Another incident in connexion with brother Jogin: At the importunities of his parents he had married; but he felt sad at heart and for shame could not come to the Master. Coming to know of this, the Master sent a man instructing that he should tell Jogin to pay off the money the latter owed him. Hearing this Jogin came, quite mortified, to the Master to pay off the few coppers he owed; but the Master did not allow the topic to be raised at all; instead, he said, "What my boy, what if you have married? Why do you not come here? Have I not married myself?" In this way did the Master keep contact with his boys. Oh! his love for us!'

'If Loren (Naren) babu would not come to Dakshineswar for just a few days the Master would send for him. On one occasion he instructed the messenger thus: "You see, you should tell Naren I am not keeping well. This broken hand is giving a lot of trouble. Perhaps the bone is broken, so he has asked you to come to Dakshineswar." Just fathom if you can, the depth of the love the Master had for Loren.'

Below we give a few more instances of the probationer's life of Lātu Maharaj during which time the Master was teaching him how to serve the Lord, how to become his servant in the true sense of the term. These instances are of the period when the Master broke his hand. In this connexion it is useful to know how Lātu Maharaj used to chronicle his life's events. He, as we have mentioned before, could not give us any dates or even years, but used to relate events to certain occurrences in the Master's life. Thus the events of his servantship period would be related to three important occurrences in the Master's life. The first period includes the years up to the Master's visit to Vidyāsāgar, the second, up to when the Master broke his hand; the third, up to his residence at Shyampukur i.e. up to August 1882, January 1884 and August 1885 respectively. Now we start with the incidents, in Lātu Maharaj's own language.

'Once as the Master was walking absorbed in thought on the bank of the Ganga he got entangled in wires and fell down, and this dislocated a bone of his hand. Dr Madhu was called. He bandaged the hand, having set the bone in position. With his hand bandaged, he would say to whomsoever he met, "Look here, Sir, Ram says I am an Incarnation of God. What do you say? Does ever a divine incarnation break his hand?" People would naturally give all kinds of opinions. For example "M" the author of *the Gospel of Sri Ramakhisha* said, "If it is possible for God to incarnate as a human being, then according to the laws of that divine sport his hand also may break." Not only did the Master ask like that, but he would show his anxiety also and ask all and sundry how he would get cured. This would annoy Rākhālbabu. One day Rākhālbabu spoke to Devenbabu in a complaining mood, "Please don't talk of medicine in his presence. He would believe in your words and would change medicines. This continual change of medicines would not cure him. Rather say, 'Continue the medicine you are taking'." One day the Master said, "I will no more take medicine. It will get cured by itself..." And it actually so happened that the medicine phial fell down and broke ... His hand having been broken we could not celebrate his birthday that year in the month of Phalguna. We did it when his hand was completely cured ... And do you know it was during this very time, when his hand was bandaged, that Keshav babu passed away. Hearing this sad news he told us, "Do you know by this Mother showed me that Keshav belonged to this group." '

(*To be continued*)

THE GREAT EQUATION

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

S. K. GUPTA

Śwetaketu : I still cannot reconcile myself to the idea of materiality of the mind. Be pleased to explain further, sir.

Aaruni : Well, I appreciate your difficulty, son. I shall give you a practical illustration.

My thesis is that matter (solid food) forms, sustains and reinforces mind. You can try it personally. Now what are you ? A Puruṣa, a person. What is this personality ? It is an assembly, an organization of body, senses and mind informed by Jiva, the reflection of the effulgent 'Sat', the conscious ego. The directing principle in this organization is mind. It is the strength, the power of mind, which gives the ego, the sense of authorship. It is the mind that makes the Puruṣa say, 'I think, I feel, I act, I will, etc.' This power of mind is sixteenfold, on the analogy of the lunar phases. That is why the Puruṣa is called 'sixteen-phased'. The entire organization derives its competence from the strength or power of mind. Muscular power greatly depends on the strength of mind. Consumption of solid food maintains this strength. Starvation and privations weaken mind and body. Rare is the person who can sustain himself through meditation. Make an experiment yourself. Fast for a fortnight but don't miss to drink water, for if you don't drink water, you may not live to narrate your experience.

So Śwetaketu went without food for fifteen days and returned.

Śwetaketu : Well father, here I am. Ask me questions.

Aaruni : Recite some of the hymns from the Vedas.

Śwetaketu : I cannot recollect, father ; my memory fails completely.

Aaruni : Do you know why ? Your mind is in a state of near extinction. Can a tiny remnant of fire, as small as a glowworm, have the same efficacy as the original fire ? The fortnight's fast undertaken by you has extinguished the fifteen phases of your psychic power, leaving only a small residue. No wonder, it cannot function as your complete mind. Go and have a good feed and come back.

So Śwetaketu broke his fast and after a feast came to his father and could answer every question on the Vedas which his father put to him.

Aaruni : Do you see the difference now ? The dying ember has been rekindled by adding fuel. The food has revived the residual phase of your mental power and regenerated the ones that were extinguished through fasting.

What conclusion would you draw from these twin methods of agreement and difference ? The irresistible conclusion would be that mind is a purely material entity, formed, fed and sustained by matter.

Śwetaketu : Sir, the following points emerge from your instructions — (a) The human organism is material, (b) it is an objectification of the Idea and Will of the Ultimate Spiritual Principle, 'Sat', and (c) that Principle is reflected on the mind.

Essentially, therefore, the Puruṣa is Spirit. But its normal conduct reveals a complete lack of awareness of this fact. Is there ever any union with Reality ? At what point does matter intersect Spirit ? In what state does this Puruṣa remain in its pristine glory bathed in the light of Spirit ?

Aaruni : The ego sense is based on the physical organization, specially on mind and the senses. When the mind and the senses cease to function, the Jīva remains in its effulgent Essence. With the elimination of dense matter, the diaphanous Spirit shines in its glory and the Jīva is absorbed in its Source of Light.

Śwetaketu : Does this unitive state then occur only on death ?

Aaruni : No — why ? Can't you think of any state, short of annihilation, wherein the sense organs cease to function ?

Śwetaketu : I imagine not sir, for even in sleep mind and senses are active.

Aaruni : Sleep comes in three stages. When you relax and shut your eyes, you grow dimmer and dimmer till your mind and senses are cut off from the physical world. Then you are transported to the world of dreams. Dream experience brings into full play your sense organs. The only difference between dream experience and normal experience lies in the absence of presentation of physical objects before the sense organs in dreams, although they sometimes have physical causes. The sense data in dreams are not actual physical entities. But they do generate the emotional reactions of pleasure and pain, even as normal experience does. This qualitative nature of dream experience shows that this is also caused by one's past acts of omission and commission — Karma — the Cause of Cosmic bondage. In that view both these types of experience appertain to phenomenal existence and are thus a far cry from unitive existence. In the last stage, however, you fall into a sound dreamless sleep. The mind and senses are switched off. The Jīva, the particularized principle, loses its limiting conditions and fuses into its radiant source. It is like the reflection merging into its source with the removal of the mirror. In the profundity of this apparent Unconsciousness, the ego sense loses its character and only Reality, the Spirit, Pure Consciousness exists. The trappings disappear, the Essence remains.

Śwetaketu : But sir, in this blacked out 'tabernacle', the Candle of Life burns ceaselessly. How can the Jīva have monistic existence in Reality ? A part of the world of appearances still remains.

Aaruni : Life is the fundamental bond, all the sense organs are tied up with it. A bird catcher loops his cord and fastens the noose on a flying bird. Thus enthralled, the bird flies about this way and that in infructuous attempts to free itself. Finally it flies back and sits on the bird catcher's pole to rest. Similarly buffeted about by the daily drudge of Karma, mind and senses are tired out and repose in their snare, the tireless Life. That is why it has been said Life (Prāna) is the body, and Light (Consciousness) the colour of Reality. The ego, embodied in Life, rests in Spirit.

Śwetaketu : Monism has been established on the psychological plane through the union of Jīva and Sat, the ego and Reality. Could not it be demonstrated on the physical plane, sir, through the Law of Causation ? By a process of ascension up the Causal nexus, could not we arrive at the First Cause ?

Aaruni : We have learned so far that (a) the Principle of Reality assumes the three primordial structures of Energy, Water and Earth (solid matter, food), (b) a synthesis of this triple principle generates the world of percepts and concepts, and (c) the empirical world is in a state of perpetual flux.

Take an obvious example. From the yonder mighty tree falls a tiny acorn. It is embedded in the earth and draws its sustenance from it. It is nurtured by water and finally sprouts into a seedling. The seedling in its turn grows into the tree. And so goes on this interminable process. The seedling is the effect of the acorn and the tree of the seedling. But ultimately it is earth and water which combine to build up the tree. The human organism is like the tree — it is also an effect and therefore must have a Cause.

Śwetaketu : But what is the Cause sir ?

Aaruni : What else but food ? Experience of hunger and thirst and demand for their satisfaction is universal. The mixture of food and drink milled through the digestive process, produces certain essential secretions which build up the body. There is not the slightest difference between the nurture and growth of the human body and that of the tree. Both are similarly conditioned.

Śwetaketu : Will you kindly describe the process, sir ?

Aaruni : The effective portions of digested food and drink are transformed into blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and finally the generative fluid in males and uterine blood in females. The sperm of the male chemically combines with and fertilises the ovum of the female and the embryo is conceived. The embryo draws its sustenance from the female body, which in turn is nourished by regular intake of food and drink. The embryo in course of time develops into a full-fledged human body. So ultimately it is the combination of earth (food) and water that generates the human body. Earth and water also having a beginning and an end are themselves effects. So we run up the ladder, come to energy, the cause of water and earth in recession. But even energy is no better, it is also an entity in the process of manifestation with a beginning and an end. So we ascend further up and come to its Cause — the 'Sat', the Ultimate Reality — the Unitary Principle. It is the Prime Mover, the Ultimate Cause of this world of appearances. The process of mutation is happening in It, throwing up a diversity of events, of percepts and concepts. As I have already stated, this process is illusory. Unity is experienced as diversity owing to an ignorance of Its Essential nature. Every effect in the causal process thus has its being and base in 'Sat' and consummates in It.

Śwetaketu : It is clear that food mixed with water builds up the body. But where does energy come in — how does it act in the causal process ?

Aaruni : Energy is fire or heat. When a person quenches his thirst, the water melts the solid food taken by him. Unless the water is evaporated or dried up by internal heat, the solid food would be completely disintegrated and liquified. The process of body building would be set back. So fire dries up water and the person feels thirsty again. Thus finally it is fire that sets in motion the metabolic process. Food needs drink to be effective and water needs fire or energy to consummate the metabolic process. That is why it is said water guides food, and fire guides water — just as a cowboy guides cattle. Therefore, energy or fire is at the end of the causal chain on the phenomenal plane. It is 'Sat' which is the Cause of fire and 'Sat' is Spirit transcending the world of phenomena, the world of words. In the realm of Spirit, there is nothing to dread, nobody to intimidate, and nothing to exert for.

Śwetaketu : Life, mind and speech are constituted of the subtle products of victuals. These form the inner being of a person. What is the process of dissolution of the organism, the aggregate of gross and subtle matter ?

Aaruni : With the approach of death, a person loses his speech but his mind still functions. Gradually mind disintegrates and the person becomes unconscious. Breath of life then tends to blow out, the vital forces are disengaged from all limbs and vital centres, and complete immobility sets in. Then respiration stops and only energy in the shape of body temperature remains. Finally that energy also is absorbed in Cosmic Energy and the person is taken as dead. Speech stays put in Mind and Mind stays put in Life. This telescoped subtlety is eventually converted into energy. Now if the Jīva, with its locus in mind, had concluded this phenomenal existence with the knowledge of Reality, it is absorbed in Sat, in Reality, as in deep sleep, with no apprehension of a come back to this doleful realm of terror. Lack of awareness of the essential nature of Reality is the cause of phenomenal appearance. With the elimination of the cause, the risk of reappearance is obviated. On the contrary if the ego dies in ignorance, it has to come back in another body carrying forward the whole bundle of ideas and impressions of its current existence. Roused from deep sleep the ego gets back to the existing body with all its internal and external paraphernalia while in rebirth it

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changes the mortal frame but not the psychic dispositions left on its mind by its antemortem thoughts and deeds.

This subtle Principle, 'Sat', Reality, the Cause of this Cosmic flux, is the 'Atman', the Essence of All, the real 'Self' of all. The phenomenal self is not Atman. As has been said, 'There is none other that sees, there is none other that hears'. It is this essence that informs everything, it is the Cause of Everything and therefore the Ultimate Reality, the Absolute Truth. The individuated consciousness, the ego is relative and limited. The first person singular is a foist on Real Self. The expressions I think, I feel, I will are misconceived, all that happens is an experience of cognition, emotion or volition.

The inmost Self of Everything and Everybody is that Ultimate Reality. And THOU ART THAT Śwetaketu. That is the Great Equation. Reality is unitary, experienced diversity is a distortion.

Śwetaketu : This is most interesting, father. Let us hear more about it. I am not quite clear in my mind as to why a person is not conscious of the unitive existence that he daily attains in deep sleep. That is really the most authentic existence. Why should we be ignorant of this great fact of being?

(*To be continued*)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Prof. P. Sankaranarayanan is Professor of Philosophy in the Bhavan's College, Bombay.

Prof. K. Subrahmanyam from Nagapattinam is an ex-vice-Principal of the Vivekananda College, Madras.

Swami Budhananda is Assistant Minister, Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York. In his introduction to the Symposium he stresses on the outlook the young Indian scientists need cultivate for the emergence of a greater India.

Dr H. N. Nanjundiah, B.E., M.S., Ph.D., who was recently with Columbia and New York Universities teaching subjects related to management of economic enterprises is presently on a Ford foundation assignment in West Africa.

Dr Aravindakshan Menon, M.Sc., Ph.D., received his doctorate in Biochemistry from the University of Bombay. At present he is doing research in Biochemistry in the Columbia University, New York.

Sri M. A. Bhakta, M.Sc., of Banaras Hindu University, was a lecturer in Chemistry for nine years in Ramnarain Ruia College, Bombay. At present he is doing research in Physical Chemistry in New York University.

Sri M. Ramachandra Das, M.Sc., after submitting his doctoral thesis in Physical Chemistry worked as a research Fellow in the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research in Bombay. He is now doing research in Physical Chemistry in the Columbia University, New York.

Sri S. Subhas Chandra, M.A., is a research scholar attached to the Universities of Cologne and Bonn, West Germany.

Sri D. K. Banerjee is from Calcutta.

"The Great Equation" by Sri S. K. Gupta is the fifth instalment of the series.

MECHANIZATION

Mechanization of every possible thing is being attempted in some Western countries where wealth is no consideration, where labour is exorbitantly costly, where problem of unemployment is not so acute, where population is sparse. But this craze appears to be catching up with India too where unemployment, population, finance, every matter poses a great problem. That being the case should not the departmental authorities of a welfare state study the pros and cons of any step they take. For instance here is a news item under the caption :

> *Mechanical aids in Post Offices soon*
>
> Dec. 4, New Delhi
>
> Mechanical aids will soon be introduced in post offices in the country for rendering quicker service to customers, reducing congestion at the counters and relieving the postal staff of fatiguing work.
>
> A number of these machines being tried at the postal research centre here were shown to the press today.
>
> A machine on trial, if put to use, will book money orders three times quicker than now.
>
> Mr. M. Dayal, Member, Posts and Telegraphs Board told newsmen that about Rs. 66 lakhs have been earmarked for this purpose in the third Plan out of which only about Rs. 60,000 have been spent so far. — (UNI)
>
> (Reported in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, 5th Dak Edition of Friday December 6, 1963.)

Are such aids absolutely necessary from the point of view of the country taken as a whole? How does it help the financial aspect of the department? Can it close down two sub-offices for every machine introduced? Or is it to be introduced in each post office of any big city? What will happen to the staff that will be thus left unemployed? Does the pressure of work really warrant introduction of such mechanical aids? These questions are to be thoroughly investigated. It is now time that not only the people in power but every educated Indian thinks about these vital questions, not only regarding this particular item but any venture that will have far reaching effects on the economy of the country.

Again there is the problem of foreign exchange. Or are these machines produced in India by Indian engineering firms? If not, how far is it justified in importing things which can wait when other more urgent needs remain unfulfilled, or to say more specifically when the figure of our loans due to foreign countries is increasing by leaps and bounds?

Perhaps on a statistical basis it may be proved that these mechanical aids are most economical for the department. But economy of a department should not upset the national economy. And the national economy we hope considers also the poor and the unemployed. It is a known fact that the more the mechanical aids the more acute is bound to be the problem of unemployment in a heavily populated country like India. This seems to be another luxury which a poor country like ours can scarcely afford. Let us not therefore rush through mechanization without consideration of all its implications.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

ADVAITA AND NEOPLATONISM: A CRITICAL STUDY IN COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY:

By J. F. Staal, University of Madras 1961. Pp. 263+xii. Price Rs. 7.

Comparative Philosophy is making very rapid strides in the present century and in this illuminating book Dr Staal states its characteristics in the first chapter. The book is divided into three parts, the first part discussing the character and methodology of comparative philosophy. The second part in a span of 123 pages deals with the important concepts of Advaita and in the third the author discusses the comparison between Advaita and Neo-Platonism. In his discussion of the Advaita categories, he finds no use for the *pramanas* and he feels that one is more true to the spirit of Sankara's Advaita in not applying this epistemological monism. Sankara's ontology rests mainly on the two *pramanas* of *Shabdha* and *pratyaksha* and even here the author feels that Advaita is not ultimately based on the Vedas in the sense in which *Purvamimamsa* bases itself on them. One significant point he makes is that the historical success of Advaita is due more to its acceptance of the *Vyavaharika* realm thus subordinating all rituals and social practices (not entirely effacing them) than due to its theory of the non-dual Absolute Brahman. Neo-Platonism in its advanced state comes very near Advaita and the author suggests that Neo-

Platonism is more world-negating than Advaita since the latter for all practical purposes accepts an empirical realm.

Dr Staal's discussion of the Mimamsa sacrifice, the theory of karma and the importance of meditation, is very significant and he points out that we cannot make a clear-cut distinction between the two Mimamsas for the reason that the Advaita developed only from the Karma Mimamsa. The sacrifice leads to a symbolism which in turn leads to meditation and to *upasana* which finally leads to Brahman. Meditation is of the stuff of both knowledge and action and it 'mediates' between the two Mimamsas. As he says, meditation is depersonalization, it is a progressive denial of everything outside the one entity concentrated upon. The author's treatment of sacrifice and its ontological implications, one feels, is distinctly superior to the extant works in which it is made out that the sacrifices represented a soul-less ritualism of the times. Applying the Existential view-point, he says sacrifice can be said to be one of the modes of human being which constitutes being. The doctrine of sacrifice is the true source of Indian thought. Dr Staal is also against the prevailing practice of ignoring the Vedic texts dealing with sacrifices and meditations and making use of only the 'philosophical' texts. Also he is of opinion that there is no necessity to present Advaita as a modern system of thought.

Dr Staal explains the principal doctrines of the Advaita system in his own order and with a slant towards existentialism and phenomenology. He confines himself to Sankara's treatment but his exposition is very fresh and he has a capacity to bring to light the fundamentals.

There are a few mistakes which could have been avoided. In page 50, the author says that Pitrayana is for those who have attained right knowledge. It is also not correct to state that transmigration was only a popular belief rejected from time to time by philosophers—especially the Bauddhas and the Advaitins. It may be that as soon as the self is realized, transmigration disappears; but this does not imply that in the empirical sphere the principle does not operate. It is also curious that Dr Staal should argue that Ishvara, the Personal God, in virtue of being a Person is more perfect than and superior to the impersonal Brahman and that it cannot be said that the lower God is a person when the higher Deity is an impersonal Absolute. We need not accept the author's dictum that the notion of the personal excludes the supra-personal.

The book is an important contribution to comparative philosophy and also is a valuable addition to the literature on Advaita Vedanta.

S. Rajagopala Sastri.

SRINGERI SOUVENIR: Pub. Sringeri Souvenir Committee, 2 Bazullah Road, Madras-17. Price Rs. 6.00.

Legend has it that when Adi Shankara was moving about in the western ghats near the Tungabhadra river looking for a proper spot to found a spiritual Centre in the South, he saw in one place a serpant with raised hood protecting a frog in labour from the hot sun. Forthwith he chose this site for his mission of the establishment of the Truth of Oneness of all life in the Divine. The first pontiff to preside over the Muth constructed there was Sureshwaracharya and among his successors are many distinguished names one of the most remarkable of which is that of Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati, the 34th pontiff who left his body in 1954.

Sri Chandrasekhara Bharati Swamigal was celebrated for his deep spiritual culture apart from his attainments in learning. Sri Tandavesvara writing in the publication under review states: 'Once when presented with a pedantic book in which a learned pundit had elaborately refuted various technical objections to Advaita raised by the head of a Madhwa Muth, His Holiness denounced it as a work of hatred which was bound to provoke more hatred and said, "The path of Dharma is broad enough for all to travel ... when we have advanced far enough ... and are on the threshold of the final goal, it will be time enough to consider the true nature of the Absolute Being."'

This lavishly got-up souvenir has been brought out on the occasion of Mahakumbhabhishekam of the shrine constructed on the samadhi of this remarkable saint and is full of contributions in English and Sanskrit throwing light on the many aspects of his mighty personality. The Number is lavishly illustrated and should occupy an important place in the documented history of the Sringeri Muth.

M. P. Pandit.

PEEPS INTO MYSTICISM: By D. Ramaswami Ayyangar, Advocate, Madras with a foreword by Sri M. Ananthasayanam Ayyangar, Governor of Bihar. Published by the Visishtadvaita Sabha, Madras-17. Pages 141. Price Rs. 2.

The first part of this thought-provoking and illuminating book deals with the Alvars, who are mystics of a very lofty order. Their mystic lives, their immortal contributions to Vaishnava thought and mysticism, the intense thirst and hunger of these God-intoxicated men for their Maker — all this has been brought out in a remarkable manner. The noble utterances which are enshrined in this book are quivering with a deep religious fervour worthy of the pious author.

The experiments which the first three Alwars have carried on in the laboratory of their souls, mark the three stages of man's spiritual evolution in the onward march of the soul. The splendid mystical experience of Nammalvar in whom there is a happy fusion of a mighty intellect and burning love cannot but arrest our attention.

Sri D. Ramaswami Ayyangar is to be congratulated on his wide reading, deep understanding of the mystical lore and the catholicity of spirit with which he approaches Sri Sankara and Ramanuja.

R. S. Desikan.

KRISHNA AVATARA VOL. I. *The Magic Flute.* By K. M. Munshi. P. 242. Price Rs. 10. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Chaupatty, Bombay-7.

The stories of our puranic heroes, gods and goddesses have not reached the saturation point, and this exceedingly well brought out publication narrating the boy-hood adventures of Sri Krishna, culminating in the killing of Kamsa, is likely to draw out the minds of the young readers in our country, which are at present diverted to the thrills, and worse, of Western fiction. Sri Krishna's child-hood offers an endless theme for poets and philosophers of any age. So eventful it had been, and so multitudinous indeed were the numerous incidents connected with His divine sport. But it would require considerable discrimination to grasp the essentials of his Rasa Lila, and of his love of Radha, often times regarded as a mystical figure. Passages in this book, which treat of some incidents of his life, however detract very much from the divinity which one associates with the Purna Avatara.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

RAMAKRISHNA LIVES VEDANTA: By Swami Chidbhavananda. Pub. Tapovanam Publishing House. Tirupparaitturai. P. 487. Price Rs. 7.00.

In this delightful book Swami Chidbhavananda presents the endearing personality of the Saint of Dakshineshwar in a new light. Certain incidents in the life of Sri Ramakrishna are selected and commented upon with a view to reveal their implications, yogic, spiritual and religious. Topics of great importance like Kundalini, Mantra, Guru, Grace, Avatara, are discussed and illustrated with the help of first-hand accounts of significant experiences of the Saint.

M. P. PANDIT.

TRIPURA RAHASYA: By Swami Ramanananda Sarasvati. Pub. Sri Ramanashramam, Tiruvannamalai. P. 258. Price Rs. 4.00.

Comprising the Jnana Khanda of the Haritayana Samhita, this work of 2,163 verses purports to give the instruction given by Parashurama to the son of Harita. Parashurama himself had received the Knowledge from Dattatreya, an Avatar of Vishnu.

There is a note of urgency throughout its 22 chapters, each of which underlines the futility of discussions and intellectual gyrations. The seeker is called upon to develop a dispassion for sense-objects and cultivate aspiration, faith, steadiness of mind and make effort to dispossess himself of the blinding folds of Ignorance. The whole universe is a projection of the Supreme Shakti and by a willed surrender to Her it is possible not only to realise Her but greet Her in all manifestation. A number of anecdotes and stories are employed with good effect to drive home the argument. The chapter on Vidya Gita is striking.

This is a book for the practical seeker and both the translator and the publishers deserve to be thanked for making it available.

M. P. PANDIT.

RAMANUJA AND BOWNE: By F. K. Lazarus. Pub. Chetana Ltd. 34, Rampart Row, Bombay 1. Pp. 332. Price Rs. 25.00.

Though it has become almost platitudinous to say that the general traditions of philosophy are the same, whether in the East or in the West, a systematic study of any particular tradition in such a direction has been still a desideratum. Prof. Lazarus' study of Ramanuja and Bowne is a pioneering attempt in the line deserving emulation by other scholars in the thoroughness with which he has tackled his subject.

Both, Ramanuja of the 11th Century A.D. and Bowne (American philosopher) of the 19th A.D. were 'personal idealists'. Their approach to the problems of Reality, world and man were largely identical. There is even, as the author proves, a striking similarity between their methodology, epistemology and metaphysics. There are, of course, certain differences e.g. on the question of the self. Again 'Ramanuja assigns a more important role to matter than does Bowne.... matter is for Ramanuja the source of finitude and evil.'

In the words of the author: 'For both Ramanuja and Bowne there is an ultimate principle which explains all things and sustains them.... the nature of this principle is personal....all selves less than this ultimate principle are themselves active personalities distinct from each other and from the divine personality. The real is the personal, and there are a plurality of reals, and hence of selves which are welded into a system by the activity of the supreme self. This supreme self is the source of all values. And these values are all anchored in personality.'

We welcome this valuable addition to contemporary philosophical literature and look forward to more studies of this kind from the learned author.

M. P. PANDIT.

MALAYALAM

VIVEKANANDA SAHITYA SARVASAM (Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda in Malayalam), Volume 6, Sambhashanangal: Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Vilangans, Trichur, 1963. Pages 535. Rs. 6.

The first three volumes of the Malayalam translation of the Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda were reviewed in the *Vedanta Kesari* last year. The sixth volume now published contains translations of Swamiji's talks arranged under four headings: 'Conversations and Dialogues' (pages 1-314), 'Inspired Talks' (316-426), 'Questions and Answers' (428-454), and 'Interviews' (456-506). The 'Inspired Talks' are based on notes of his talks made by his disciple Sister Haridasi (Miss S. E. Waldo) when he stayed for seven weeks in 1895 at Thousand Island Park on the St. Lawrence in America. The translation by Swami Siddhinathananda is lucid and accurate, and the editorial work is done with great care as in the previous volumes. Besides a detailed subject index, there are indices of books referred to and quotations given.

K. K. RAJA.

TAMIL

THIRUKKURAL: Edited by Sri K. V. Jagannathan. Pub: Sri Ramakrishna Mission Vidyalaya, Coimbatore. Pages 1,020. Price Rs. 18.

It is true beyond a shadow of doubt that Thirukkural has commanded the homage of every age and clime. It has been rendered in several languages. The loftiness of its sentiments and ideas, the utmost economy of its expression, its wide religious tolerance, its great freedom from any kind of prejudice, its fulmination against the gross corruption of its age and orgies of drinking and gambling exercise a sobering and subduing influence on man.

In this scholarly and critical edition Sri K. V. Jagannathan has brought in almost all the details regarding this great and towering personality. The age in which he lived, the various writers he has influenced, the countless passages of authors who have woven into the texture of their compositions, the immortal lines of Thirukkural; the essence of the innumerable commentaries that are available, the list of several translations of this world renowned book, and the critical essays by several eminent writers—all adorn the pages of this edition. This edition is the result of a long and laborious process of research. It is the fruit of Sri Jagannathan's wide scholarship, fine discrimination, maturity of judgment and the remarkable art of editing which he has learnt from his master to his great advantage.

R. S. Desikan.

BOOKS RECEIVED

ALBERT SCHWEITZER: Pp. 32. Price 50 nP.
SERVANTS OF SIND: Pp. 32. Price 50 nP.
SONS OF KRISHNA: Pp. 64. Price Re. 1.
THE WISDOM OF THE RISHIS: Pp. 32. Price 50 nP. All by T. L. Vaswani, 10, Connaught Road, Poona-1.

ADHYATMA-VIDYA: By T. R. Rau, 'Poorna Prakash', 4, Jagadambal Colony, Royapettah, Madras-14. Pp. 40. Price Rs. 2.

JAPA AND SAGUNA UPASANA: By C. S. Ramaswami. Pub. Mahanandi Publications, Anantapur. Pp. 21. Price 25 nP.

REMINISCENCES OF A JURIST: By K. R. R. Sastry, 29, Dwaraka Colony, Madras-4. Pp. 96. Price Rs. 4.

MUKUNDAMALA (Telugu): Translated by Mallikarjunam. Pp. 20. Price 50 nP.

VIVEKA RASHMI (Bengali): Pub. Ramakrishna Mission Ashrama, Narendrapur, 24 Parganas, West Bengal. Pp. 53. Price 50 nP.

BAPU IS ALIVE: By Dr T. P. Bhat. Published by Bharath Shakthi Publications, Mangalore-1. Pp. 14. Price 45 nP.

INDIA 1963: Pub.: Publication Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Govt. of India, New Delhi. Pp. 466. Price Rs. 6.50.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS-4

Holy Mother's Birthday Celebrations

The 111th Birthday Tithipuja of the Holy Mother, Sri Sarada Devi, was observed at the Math on Saturday, December 7, 1963. The day started with Mangalarti in the Shrine at 5 a.m. followed by devotional songs and Vedic chanting. Worship in the Shrine started at 7-45 a.m. and came to a close at 12-30 p.m. after Homa. About 700 devotees and 1,100 Daridranarayanas were served with food prasad. In the evening after Arati in the Shrine, a few teachings of the Holy Mother were read. Swami Paramatmananda and Swami Suddhasatwananda spoke on the occasion.

The public meeting came off on Sunday, December 8, 1963 which commenced at 3-30 p.m. with bhajan by lady devotees. The meeting started at 4-15 p.m. with prayer by students of Sri Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Vidyalaya Girls' High School. The President of the meeting, the speakers and the audience were welcomed by Sister Subbulakshmi.

Dr (Miss) A. R. Irawathy, Principal, Queen Mary's College presided over the meeting. Srimati A. S. Rajammal, B.Sc., B.T. and Srimati S Thangam, B.A., B.T. spoke in English and Tamil respectively on the Holy Mother and her message. Music by Srimati Palani Vijayalakshmi, speech in Telugu by Srimati Sundaram, B.A., B.T. were next in the programme. After recitations by some of the prize winners and distribution of prizes the President made her concluding remarks. After a vote of thanks by Mrs Kamala Sarathy the meeting came to a close.

There was kirtan led by Swami Priyananda after Arati in the Shrine, for an hour and a half.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

At Mandavalipakkam, (South Madras)

The South Madras, celebrated Swami Vivekananda Centenary Celebrations at Srimati Narayani Ammal Kalyana Mantapam, Raja Annamalaipuram on December 13, 1963, with Upanishad parayana at 4-30 p.m. and public meeting at 5-30 p.m. Swami Suddhasatwananda presided over the meeting. Sri K. Balasubramania Aiyar, Prof. T. N. Seshadri, Sri V. K. Narasimhan, Sri K. V. Jagannathan, Sri K. Krishna Nair and Dr A. R. Iravati Ammal spoke on the life and mission of Swamiji.

AT GOPALAPURAM (Madras)

The local Centenary Committee of Royapettah and Gopalapuram celebrated the centenary of Swami Vivekananda on Sunday, December 15, 1963 at the Gopalapuram Boys' High School. The function began with Pooja and Homa in the morning followed by poor feeding in the noon, a public meeting in the afternoon and a procession at night. The public meeting was presided over by Hon. Justice Mr. P. Ramakrishnan. Swami Suddhasatwananda, Dr V. Raghavan and Sri S. Sacchidanandam Pillai spoke on the life and message of Swamiji.

AT WASHERMANPET, (North Madras)

North Madras celebrated the Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda at Sir Theagaraya College, Washermanpet on December 21 and 22, 1963. On the evening of December 21, there was a film show on the life of Sri Ramakrishna with Tamil commentary by Swami Sarvajnananda.

The 22nd function began with Vedaparayana at 6-30 a.m. followed by Puja and Homa by Swami Suddhasatwananda. About 1,000 daridranarayanas were fed after the Puja. At 2-30 p.m. a procession with a tastefully decorated picture of Swamiji went round the streets of Washermanpet.

There was a public meeting at 6 p.m. which was presided over by Hon. Justice K. S. Venkataraman. Swami Suddhasatwananda, Sri S. N. A. Aziz, Dr Vijayalakshmi, Sri Chittoor V. Nagaiah spoke on the occasion. At 10 p.m. there was *Kathakalakshepam* by Sri Muruga Kripananda Wariyar. All the items of the programme were well attended and the whole function was a grand success. There was also *Villu Pattu* by the students of the Ramakrishna Mission Boys' High School, Madras.

AT TRIPLICANE (MADRAS)

The Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Celebration Committee for Triplicane celebrated centenary utsav on Wednesday, December 25, 1963. The function which was held at the Hindu High School, Triplicane, started with Suprabhatam at 7-00 a.m. followed by Veda Parayana at 7-30 a.m. after which puja was performed. There was singing of devotional songs also.

Food was distributed to about 1,500 *daridranarayanas* from 12-00 noon onwards.

At 3-30 p.m. there was a discourse by Sri Muruga Kripananda Wariyar on Swami Vivekananda and Sri Ramakrishna. The public meeting started at 5-00 p.m. with Sri T. L. Venkatarama Aiyar in the chair. A beautiful portrait of Swami Vivekananda presented to the High School by Sri Krishna Stores, Triplicane, was unveiled by Swami Kailasananda, President, Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras. Sri M. P. Sivagnana Gramani, Swami Paramatmananda, Sri K. S. Ramaswami Sastri and Sri S. V. Chitti Babu spoke on the life and message of Swamiji. At about 10-00 p.m. a decorated portrait of Swami Vivekananda was taken in procession round some of the streets in Triplicane. There was a good gathering during the meeting. The other functions were also well attended.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, MANGALORE

Report for 1962-63

The Ramakrishna Mission, Mangalore, runs a Boys' Home and a Charitable Dispensary. The number of students maintained in the different institutions at the end of the year under report was as follows: Higher Elementary School 12, High School 20, College 11. Of these 39 were free, 1 on concession and 3 paying. In the Balakashrama an attempt is made to impart integral education through the inculcation of spiritual values in their widest sense. The Dispensary treated 36,424 patients during the year of which 7,983 were new cases. The management thanks all donors, as also the physicians for their honorary services and appeals to the public for continued support and encouragement.

A new dormitary, in memory of Swami Vivekananda on the occasion of his Birth Centenary is proposed to be constructed during the year 1963 and is estimated to cost about Rs. 60,000. Besides this the needs of the Ashrama are permanent endowments (1) for maintaining the poor students, (2) for the maintenance of the Dispensary.

RAMAKRISHNA MISSION, NEW DELHI

REPORT FOR 1962-63

The activities of the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi consist of holding religious classes and lectures, celebrations of the Birthdays of the Great Teachers, and running of a Library and Reading Room, a Free Tuberculosis Clinic, an Outdoor Homeopathic Dispensary, and religious and moral instruction classes for children aged 6 to 12 years.

The Tuberculosis Clinic is equipped not only for general treatment, but also for surgical measures. The number of patients treated in the clinic during the period under review was 1,39,220 of which 2,047 were new. During the same period 526 indoor cases were treated of which 269 were new. The Outdoor Dispensary treated 30,866 cases of which 6,886 were new.

37 Sunday discourses were held by the Secretary, Swami Swahananda. 39 Tulsi Ramayana discourses in Hindi were also held during the year.

The average attendance at the library was 357 per day. During the period 1,319 books were added and 14,511 books were issued, the reading room received 13 newspapers and 118 periodicals.

Sri Sarada Mahila Samiti held meetings and bhajans. The Programme of medico-social service work at the Lady Hardinge College Hospital was continued during the year.

The management thanks the donors, subscribers, friends and honorary and paid staff for their devoted services.

The birthday Thithipuja of Swami Vivekananda falls on Monday, January 6, 1964.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS, MADRAS

AT SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MYLAPORE, MADRAS-4.

PROGRAMME from 10th to 26th January, 1964

10th FRIDAY
8 to 10 a.m. — Special Puja and Bhajan
6 p.m. — Opening of Exhibition by His Excellency the Governor of Madras.
President : Dr. A. L. Mudaliar.

11th SATURDAY
5-30 p.m. — Declaring open the Vivekananda Centenary Building and Inauguration of the Inter-Religious Conference by Srimat Swami Madhavanandaji, President, R.K. Math & Mission.
President : Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar.
7 to 9 p.m. — Harikatha by Sri Balakrishna Sastrigal : "Vivekananda Vijayam."

12th SUNDAY
9 to 10 a.m. — Parayana of the Life and Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda.
3 to 5 p.m. — Children's Day :
Talks, Drama, Recitation, Physical Feats, etc.
5-30 to 8 p.m. — Release of Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda in Tamil and Telugu by Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar.
Inter-Religious Conference.
President : Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar.
Speakers :
1. On Zoroastrianism—Sri Dastoor N. D. Minochecha Homiji, M.A., Bombay.
2. On Jainism—Prof. S. A. Jain, M.A., L.T., Author of 'Reality', Madurai.
3. On Christianity—Rev. Dr. Anthony Elenjimittam, Editor, *Basic Education*, Bombay.

8 to 9 p.m. — Scenes from Chicago Parliament. By Boys of R.K. Mission School.

13th MONDAY
7 a.m. to 12 Noon — Rudra Yagam.
5-30 to 8 p.m. — Release of "Swami Vivekananda's Life" in Tamil by Sri C. Rajagopalachari.
Inter-Religious Conference.
President : Sri C. Rajagopalachari.
Speakers :
1. On Buddhism—Rev. Ananda Kausalyan, Ceylon University.
2. On Islam—Dr. Bukhari, Principal, New College, Madras.
3. On Sikhism—Dr. Gopal Singh, M.P., New Delhi.

14th TUESDAY
9 to 11 a.m. — Giving fruits and sweets to T.B. and Leprosy patients in Hospitals.
10 to 1 p.m. — Recitation Competition for School Students (Girls)
5-30 to 8 p.m. — Inter-Religious Conference.
President : Swami Prabhavanandaji (Head of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, Hollywood).
Speakers :
1. On Advaita—Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D.
2. On Visishtadvaita—Sri Ramanuja Thathachariar of Kumbakonam.
3. On Dwaita Philosophy—Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao. M.A., D.LITT., Reader in Philosophy, Sri Venkateswara University.

15th WEDNESDAY
10 to 1 p.m. — Recitation Competition for School Students (Boys)
5-30 to 8 p.m. — Inter--Religious Conference.
President : Hon'ble Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam, Chief Minister, Madras.
Speakers :
1. On Swami Vivekananda (in Sanskrit)—Sri T. L. Venkata rama Aiyar.
2. On Swami Vivekananda's Karma Yoga and Bhakti Yoga—
3. On Swami Vivekananda (with special reference to his Jnana and Raja Yogas)—Swami Ranganathanandaji.

8 to 8-30 p.m. — Fire Works in the P. S. High School Compound, Mylapore.

16th THURSDAY
5 p.m. — Celebrations at the Madras University.
Speaker : Swami Ranganathanandaji.
6-15 to 7-15 p.m. — Ramanam Bhajan.
7-15 to 8-30 p.m. — Talks on Swami Brahmanandaji Maharaj by Swami Prabhavanandaji of Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Centre, Hollywood, U.S.A.

17th FRIDAY
5-30 to 7-30 p.m. — Women's Conference.
President :
Speakers :
1. On Swami Vivekananda—Swami Prabhavanandaji Maharaj.
2. On Andal—Sister R. S. Subbalakshmi (in Tamil).
3. On Sister Nivedita—
4. On Sri Rabiya—Mamooda Haja Shereef.

8 p.m. — *Film Show* : Rani Rasmani (in Bengali)

18th SATURDAY	11 to 11-30 a.m.	Essay and Oratorical Competition for College Students.
	5-30 to 8 p.m.	Women's Conference. *President* : *Speakers* : 1. On Swami Vivekananda—Swami Ranganathanandaji. 2. On Sita—Smt. Vajreswari (in Tamil). 3. On Sri Sarada Devi—Pravrajika Sraddhaprana of Sri Sarada Math. 4. On St. Teresa—Miss G. Samuel, Principal, St. Christopher Training College for Women.
	8 to 9 p.m.	Kali Kirtan by Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order.
19th SUNDAY	2 to 5 p.m.	* Procession from Egmore Rly. Station to Vivekananda House (Ice House). Prime Minister will join the procession for some time.
	5-30 to 7-30 p.m.	Unveiling of the statue of Swami Vivekananda at Marina by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru. Release of Swami Vivekananda Centenary Souvenir by the Prime Minister. Welcome by Hon'ble Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam, Chief Minister, Madras. *Speeches* : Shri Nehru. Shri K. Kamraj. Swami Ranganathanandaji.
	8 p.m.	Bhajana.
20th MONDAY	5-30 to 8 p.m.	Students' Day — Swami Vivekananda's Idea on Education. *Chief Guest* : Hon'ble Sri C. R. Pattabhiraman. Union Deputy Minister, Labour & Employment and Planning, New Delhi. *Speakers* : 1. Swami Ranganathanandaji. 2. Swami Lokeswaranandaji. 3. Students' Representatives : (1) Kumari Mridula Rao, Final B.SC., Queen Mary's College, Madras. (2) Sri P. S. Sundaram, Final B.A., Vivekananda College, Mylapore.
21st TUESDAY	7 to 9 p.m.	Music Performance : Sri Ariyakudi Ramanuja Iyengar & Party.
22nd WEDNESDAY	-do-	-do- Sri Madurai Mani Iyer & Party.
23rd THURSDAY	-do-	-do- Sri Ramarao Parsatwar of Bombay—Jaltarang. Sri Muraliswami of Bombay—Tabla. Sri Pavitra Kumar Acharya of Delhi—Bhajana.
24th FRIDAY	8 to 10 a.m.	Gita Homa—by Sri Anna & Party.
	7 to 9 p.m.	Drama on Swami Vivekananda (in 5 languages) by Staff and Students of Vivekananda College.
25th SATURDAY	12-30 to 5-30 p.m.	Sports Final (at the Rajaratnam Stadium, Egmore).
	6-30 to 8-30 p.m.	Physical Feats by the famous athlete Prof. Bishnu Charan Ghosh & Party of Calcutta.
26th SUNDAY	8 to 11 a.m.	Saptasati Homa (Chandi)—by Swamis of the Order.
	12 Noon to 2 p.m.	Daridra Narayana Seva.
	4-30 to 6-30 p.m.	Public Meeting on "Swami Vivekananda". *President* : Dewan Bahadur Sri K. S. Ramaswami Sastriar. *Speakers* : 1. On Swami Vivekananda's Influence on Modern Thought—Sri K. V. Jagannathan (in Tamil). 2. On Swami Vivekananda's Ideal of Service—Swami Hirenmoyanandaji. 3. On Swami Vivekananda's Contribution to Modern Resurgence of India—Sri K. Panchapagesa Iyer, M.A.
	6-30 to 8-30 p.m.	Physical Feats by Prof. Bishnu Charan Ghosh & Party of Calcutta.
	8-30 to 9-30 p.m.	Procession.

* Special trains will run from Mambalam to Egmore at 1 & 1-30 p.m.

It will require a huge amount to work out the above programme. Our friends and sympathisers are requested to contribute liberally to enable us to celebrate the Centenary of the great philosopher and patriot saint of India in a fitting manner. Contributions will be thankfully received and acknowledge by

THE SECRETARY,
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA CENTENARY COMMITTEE,
11, Ramakrishna Math Road, Madras-4.

20-12-63.

N.B.—The Railway Board have been pleased to grant concession — single fare for return journey tickets to all those who will attend the Inter-Religious and Women's Conferences.

(The programme may undergo some changes.)

.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. L FEBRUARY 1964 No. 10

PANCADAŚĪ

समष्टिरीशस्सर्वेशां स्वात्मतादात्म्यवेदनात् । तदभावात्ततोऽन्ये तु कथ्यन्ते व्यष्टिसंज्ञया ॥ २५ ॥

Īśaḥ, Hiranyagarbha ; *sarveṣām*, of all ; *svātmani*, in one's own Self ; *tādātmyavedanāt*, because of the knowledge of identity ; *samaṣṭiḥ*, (is called) the totality; *tu*, but; *tataḥ*, than that ; *anyé*, others (the jivas); *tadabhāvāt*, because of the absence of that (the knowledge of identity); *vyaṣṭi samjñayā*, by the designation of individuals (*vyaṣṭi*); *kathyanté*, are called.

25. The Hiranyagarbha because of His knowledge of identity with all in His own Self is called the totality, whereas the others (the *jīvas*) because of the absence of that knowledge of identity are called the individuals.

तद्भोगाय पुनर्भोग्यभोगायतनजन्मने । पञ्चीकरोति भगवान् प्रत्येकं वियदादिकम् ॥ २६ ॥

Bhagavān, the Lord (the repository of all powers); *punaḥ*, again ; *tat*, theirs (jivas); *bhogya*, food etc. ; *bhogāyatana*, the bodies in which the enjoyment is made possible ; *janmané*, for the creation ; *viyadādikam*, *ākāśa* and other subtle elements ; *pratyekam*, each one ; *pancīkaroti*, makes to contain all the five elements (in order to make them gross).

26. Bhagavan,[1] the repository of all powers, again, for the experience of the *jīvas*, creates the enjoyables and the different bodies[2] and in order to do so He makes each one of the five perceptible elements contain all the five subtle elements, (a process which is called *Pancīkaraṇa*).

[1] The meaning of the word *Bhagavan* is depicted in two Sanskrit verses thus : 'One who is the complete possessor of the six types of excellences or riches viz. superhuman powers, valour, beauty, glory, knowledge, renunciation,' * and, 'He is said to be Bhagavan who knows about the creation and dissolution of the universe, the birth and death of embodied beings, and knowledge as well as nescience.'†

*ऐश्वर्यस्य समग्रस्य वीर्यस्य यशस: श्रिय: । ज्ञान वैराग्ययोश्चैव षण्णां भग इतीरित: ॥
†उत्पत्तिं विलयंचैव भूतानामागतिं गतिम् । वेत्तिं विद्यामविद्यां च स वाच्यो भगवानिति ॥

[2] Bodies such as those produced from the earth, sweat, egg and womb.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA THE PRACTICAL MYSTIC

The nineteenth century was a period full of upheavals all over the world. It was so in Europe, in which the Industrial Revolution set things apace and changed man's mode of living as well as ways of thinking. It was in the last century again that Charles Darwin by his theory of biological evolution threw a challenge to religion. It was also in the nineteenth century that there was a civil war in the new continent, that of America, that made the United States a fact of history. It was during that period again that a scramble for overseas empires began and India came to be more and more dominated by the British. The British, however, not confining themselves to political domination ventured to penetrate into the cultural field of Indian life, with their very subtle methods. The British posed as benefactors of the Indian people and wanted to civilize a backward race—as they presented the Indian people to the world. Indians were told, that their religion was crude, that their scriptures were mere superstitions and that deliverance lay in giving them up and following Western modes of thought and life.

But yet another upheaval more powerful, more lasting, greater in extension and richer in content, in answer to many of these little tumults, also came about in the last century, viz. the spiritual upheaval. It was ushered in by Sri Ramakrishna, born in a village, acting as a temple priest at Dakshineswar, not far from Calcutta, with very little of the so-called education but deeply rooted in the culture of the soul. His life was a fitting reply, a challenge to the clamours of the iconoclasts, to the agnostic and the atheist, to the doubter of the efficacy of Hindu religion to stand its ground against other religions and last but not least to the onslaught of the then scientific man on religion itself. Forces of religion were rallied round, as it were, to encounter the rising tide of agnosticism in the person of Sri Ramakrishna.

Sri Ramakrishna's was a wonderful life. He began with a simple faith in God that was nurtured in the innocence of a village life, guarded in a home of pious parents, and enthralled in the legacy native to his being. As he pursued his spiritual practices he no doubt passed through dismal nights of doubt, but only to be firmly and indissolubly bound to the Divine Mother, by the blessing of Her vision—an experience that made him cling to Her, like a child to its mother, all his life. Her first vision brought on him a raging fever, as it were, to have her complete and uninterrupted presence. He pined and writhed in pain at separation from Her. In his anguish he rubbed his face on the rugged ground till it bled ; so acute was his sorrow, so intense was his despair. He strained every nerve for that and completely gave his mind to Her. In this respect Sri Ramakrishna may be called a spiritual scientist. He, like the Rishis of old, was never content with theories but wanted to test them in the laboratory of practice and would not rest until he had gained his end. When he began the worship of the Divine Mother in the temple of Dakshineswar, he asked himself this question : 'Is the Divine Mother only a stone image ?' He thought he must verify it. He held a piece of cotton to the nostrils of the Image and strange to say he felt the breath of the Mother on it. He felt it more tangibly than he felt his own breath. That was the method of his experimentation. If the Divine Mother was a conscious entity She should be seen, should be realized—that was his firm determination. This determination was backed by a strong renunciation and a penetrative discrimination.

Even as a boy he had discovered by observation the futility of mere book-learning—a learning which could be only a means of earning livelihood and of no further use. It did not solve the problem of life, did not unfold its meaning. On the other hand his first mystic experience at the age of seven, at Kamarpukur, at the sight of white cranes flying across sombre clouds had bathed his soul in great bliss. Compared with it, he found all other joy only a semblance of it. His father's devotion to God, rich with dreams and visions, had helped the boy to concentrate his mind on Him. And his father's death, early though it was in his life to leave its full impress, still had left some void in the boy's heart. That the boy felt his mother's sorrow and ceased to tease her with his importunities after the death of his father gives evidence of this. His association with the wandering monks who visited the village of Kamarpukur kindled the fire of renunciation. Lastly, the religious performances of the wandering minstrels lit up his love of God. His power of concentration, specially on subjects connected with the Godhead, increased enormously, so much so that on occasions he was absorbed, completely oblivious of his surroundings, in the thoughts of the particular Deities, which the circumstances would arouse. His second ecstasy occurred on the way to the Temple of Visalakshi, the Divine Mother, of Anur and his absorption in the thought of Śiva on the Śivaratri, when he was called upon to act the part of Śiva in the village drama, was his third mystic experience that lasted for a long time. Thus grounded in discrimination and renunciation and mind given to God, Sri Ramakrishna entered the state of adolescence well-equipped to start on his journey of mystical pursuit.

Before we proceed with our subject let us state what we understand by mystic experience in this context. It is not something that is mysterious or unravellable. It is not a thing of the past. It does not exhaust the human being. It is an experience of the supernatural. It is living beyond the senses. It can be experienced even now by those who live a pure and unsullied life and pursue the path of spirituality. It is the going to the source of all bliss. It is seeing God; being touched by Him. It is bliss of God or Atman bathing the soul. It is a state where all senses are left behind. Even speech cannot reach it. That is why it is not possible to describe it through the vehicle of language. Language is but a poor porter there. It is left far outside. It has no access to those chambers. This is what Sri Ramakrishna told his disciples. This is what we can see, if we care to, in his life. This is also what the Upaniṣads declare: 'From whence speech unable to penetrate returns with the mind, reaching that bliss of Brahman a seer never fears anything.'[1] Reaching it man goes beyond all fear. He finds nothing else but himself or his God present everywhere. Normally, man in this world is afraid of several things and the worst fear of all is the fear of death—and these fears continue as long as he sees a second being other than himself. Even death of the physical body holds no fear to a person who has realized that he is deathless. Is this then not a significant benefit? Is it not a covetable experience? Mystic experience, in brief, is something that can be felt by a human being, if there be the requisite qualities of purity and other disciplines to his credit. Sri Ramakrishna experienced this mystic touch even in his first ecstasy in Kamarpukur. When all the household was perturbed at the sudden event and were trying to find remedy for the malady, the boy, Gadadhar, for so was Sri Ramakrishna named in his younger days, assured his parents that he did not feel anything bad, that, rather, he felt a flow of bliss during the period of his unconsciousness. This was subsequently corroborated when nothing untoward happened to the boy.

Sri Ramakrishna's mystic experiences are innumerable to be enumerated here. But as far as is necessary to our subject we shall refer to some of them now and then. A spiritual person in India if anything is intensely practical, if not he is nothing. Speaking about practicality Swamiji once said to an audience in the West: 'Just as your people are practical in many things, so it seems our people are practical in this line (spirituality). Five persons in this country (America) will join their heads together and say, "We will have a joint stock company," and in five hours it is done; in India they could not do it in fifty years; they are so unpractical in matters like this. But, mark you, if a man starts a system of philosophy however wild its theory may be, it will have followers. For instance, a sect is started to teach that if a man stands on one leg for twelve years, day and night, he will get salvation—there will be hundreds ready to stand on one leg. All the suffering will be quietly borne... So you see the word practical is also relative.' So spirituality, religion and philosophy have a practical basis in India. And practice alone can bring one to fulfilment of one's ideal. This was obviously known to Sri Ramakrishna. So he plunged headlong into spiritual practices. Night and day he was absorbed in the thought of the Mother, at Dakshineswar. His only idea was to know and see Her. In the beginning he had none to guide him. But his own intense yearning brought on Her vision. He had heard that God never came to a person who was conscious of his ego, who looked upon himself as a man of noble birth, as a person of wealth and so on. Therefore, at dead of night, after every one had retired to bed, he would steal into the nearby Panchavati and casting off the sacred thread, the symbol of Brahmanhood, and even the wearing cloth, sit for meditation, deeply absorbed in the thought of God. His nephew and attendant Hriday noticed his absence from his room for several days.

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[1] यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।
आनन्दं ब्रह्मणो विद्वान् न भिभेति कुतश्चनेति ॥

One night wanting to know where Sri Ramakrishna went and what he did, Hriday followed him. But he felt scandalized when Sri Ramakrishna put off the sacred thread and the wearing cloth as well, as he sat in the woods for meditating. Hriday took him to task for his sacrilegious act. For a Brahmin to cast off the sacred thread! He could not think of it. But Sri Ramakrishna was unperturbed. He calmly replied, 'If a person wants to approach God, he should cast aside his sense of aristocracy of birth, wealth and the like and humble himself before God. For what are they before the omnipotent and omniscient Being? So I am trying to do that.' Another time Hriday tried to frighten his uncle out of the wood by throwing sand in the direction where he sat. But Sri Ramakrishna was lost to the outside world the moment he had entered the woods. So deep was his concentration. The fury of his hunger for God increased as days went by. He rolled on the ground calling, 'Mother,' 'Mother'. People around thought of him in various ways. Some thought him mad. Some others thought that he was crying out of colic pain. But to him, as he himself expressed later on to his disciples, the persons around were like pictures painted on a wall or at best were mere shadows.

Again, Sri Ramakrishna was not satisfied with a chance acquaintance with the Divine Mother. Perhaps, in spite of the bliss that he felt on his first vision, he had questioned himself, as Narendranath did later, whether it was not some fancy of his mind that made him think that he had a vision of the Mother. Actually, however, the bliss itself had made him mad, as it were, for Her perpetual presence, as a lover longs for the presence of the beloved, as a child longs for the mother, and as a man of the world yearns for more and more wealth. And till he obtained the continuous vision of the Divine Mother and forced it, as it were, from Her, he was not contented. That was why he used to say: 'Who is my Mother! Is She a step-mother, no, She is my own Mother.' Yet other times he advised: 'Force your demand on God; claim your birthright as a son claims his patrimony.' To him God-vision is the birthright of every human being. We are the children of the Divine Mother. Why should She then withhold Her vision from us? We have every right to claim it. That was his firm conviction. Nay, it is his assurance to us from his life's own experience.

To him came the teachers of different faiths when he had known the Divine Mother, when he had conclusively established the relation of a child with Her; when he could see Her, and talk to Her whenever he desired to do so. In his case, to quote his own simile, the fruit came first and then the flower. His later *sādhanas* were for the verification of what he had already known by his earnest faith and boundless yearning. His earlier realizations were corroborated when he followed the path laid down in the scriptures. After his first realization he came in contact with the Godhead following other paths in a very short time. It did not take him more than three days to arrive at the culmination of any one path. Here also he was most practical. He put his whole mind, body and soul into it. For instance, when he was undergoing the disciplines of Islamic faith, he abstained from visiting the temples, everything about the Divine Mother was forgotten. In habits as well as costumes he followed the Mohammedans in every detail. And that is why he could arrive at the result in so short a time.

In the case of Advaitic *sādhana* he had a little difficulty. While trying to concentrate his mind on the formless Brahman, the benign form of Divine Mother appeared before him everytime. He expressed his difficulty to Sri Totapuri, his teacher in the Advaitic *sādhana*. The latter was not to be put away. He pressed a piece of broken glass between his eyebrows and asked him to concentrate his mind on that spot. No sooner did Sri Ramakrishna direct his mind towards his eyebrows than the Mother's form appeared before his mind's eye but this time he cleaved it, as it were, by the sword of knowledge. The thin veil that separated him from Brahman fell and he passed into the realm of the Unknowable. It was now the turn of Totapuri, who had taken forty years to reach the state of Nirvikalpa Samadhi, to be surprised at the ease and rapidity with which Sri Ramakrishna had scaled the pinnacle of spiritual realization. For three days, Totapuri kept watch over Sri Ramakrishna. On the fourth day Totapuri, assured that the latter had been established in the discipline, brought him to normal consciousness.

It will be an incomplete survey of the practicality of Sri Ramakrishna as a mystic if we do not mention here how he expanded the vision of those who came in contact with him, even those who came to teach. For, as Swamiji said, Sri Ramakrishna's life itself was a Parliament of Religions. It was therefore natural that those who came to him should have their views extended. We shall cite only the example of Totapuri again. Totapuri, who never stayed for more than three days at any place, charmed with the surroundings of Dakshineswar and enthralled by Sri Ramakrishna spent there nearly eleven months. But he could not understand Sri Ramakrishna's worship of the Divine Mother even after attaining the Nirvikalpa *samadhi*. To him all these forms were only illusions. Sri Ramakrishna, however, chided him for his disparaging remarks about the worship and prayer to God with form. But deeply imbued with the idea of Advaita Vedanta as he was, Totapuri could not easily give in. Strange, however, are the ways of God. Though he tried to take leave of Sri Ramakrishna several times, something held him back from broaching the subject. At last he fell a victim to dysentery. Griping pain laid him down. He could not sit for meditation. One day in utter disgust he wanted to cast off the body by drowning himself in the Ganga. For what use was it if the mind could not be immersed in the Self. Resolved to do so, one night he walked into the Ganga but wonder of wonders was that though he waded through the river, the water never reached above his knees. In amazement he cried out, 'What strange *māyā* is this?' Turning back towards the temple of Bhavatarini he saw the benign form of the Divine Mother. He returned to the Panchavati and lay himself down, soothed in body being relieved of pain. Next day Sri Ramakrishna saw him cheerful. Totapuri narrated the incident to Sri Ramakrishna and having been thus enlightened he shed his dogmatic outlook and took leave of Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna came to the world to teach mankind that every path was true. Would then the Mother allow his teacher to remain a fanatic? That was not to be. Sri Ramakrishna's contact thus corrected the views of even his teachers.

Another matter Sri Ramakrishna paid great attention to was the company his young disciples kept. In spite of the loving and compassionate heart that he possessed, he could not allow his disciples to mix with any and every sort of man who came even in the guise of a monk. Once a wandering minstrel, a baul came to Dakshineswar and wanted to sit for food along with Narendranath and others who were having a picnic in the Panchavati. The Master did not allow it. He said: 'What merit has he earned that he will sit with you? One should be very careful in associating with people during the early period of one's spiritual life. It harms one's spiritual growth if one indiscriminately mixes with people.'

It is said that religion and religious experiences are other-worldly. First thing here to remember is, that all religions can be followed here and now though we may reap the results of our actions in the other worlds also. Secondly religious experience has an effect on man in this world too. The natural and other forces leave no mark on him. Entering him they are lost like the rivers in the ocean. He alone becomes like a limpid pool, calm, serene and peaceful, and not he who is running after the sense objects, says the Gita.[2] Thirdly religion is the basis of morality. By religion no dogma or creed is meant. Religion, as Swamiji often stressed, is realization: realization of God; realization of the unity of all beings. When that realization comes then alone can man talk of universal brotherhood. Today humanity suffers from all types of handicaps, racial, so-called religious, social and others. In such a world the only way to come together is by spiritual realization. In this respect Sri Ramakrishna's contribution is invaluable, immeasurable, overwhelming. By his life he showed that dissensions due to these badges of religion are not necessary. They only bring unrest. Nay, they are harmful. But sad to say, humanity has yet to learn this lesson. Will it ever awake? It can do so if it studies Sri Ramakrishna.

Lastly we shall say a few words as to how practical Sri Ramakrishna was in his normal life. He trained the Holy Mother how to live in the household. He taught her every detail of housekeeping, beginning from the way to trim the lamp upto dealing with persons whom she would have to contact. He chastised his disciples when they took anything for granted. One day he gave a young disciple (Swami Yogananda) some money to purchase a frying pan. The disciple believed the shop-keeper and brought the pan the trader gave without examining it. It was however found that the shopkeeper had deceived the boy and given him a broken pan. At this Sri Ramakrishna commented: 'That you have become a *sadhu* is no reason that you should be a fool as well. The trader is not there to earn merit but make money. So before you purchase anything examine it, enquire at other shops and in the case of purchases where an extra allowance is made collect that too.' Such was the advice on things secular by a person who could not take proper care of his wearing apparel! What then to speak of lesser beings! Sri Ramakrishna as we see him portrayed to us in his biographies and talks was intensely practical not only in spiritual but also in secular matters. That is why he has an appeal even to the most modern man. We are sure the erroneous impression that a mystic is a mysterious being will clear away if Sri Ramakrishna's life is properly and critically studied.

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[2] आपूर्यमाणमचळप्रतिष्ठं
समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत् ।
तद्वत् कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे
स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥

SOME THOUGHTS ON SRI RAMAKRISHNA AND HIS MESSAGE

SWAMI VIJNANANDA

It is only with a sense of reverential adoration that one can talk or write about Sri Ramakrishna. His is a personality one with God and his is a life one with the Divine. If anything is proved by his advent in the world, it is the fact of God. His personality reached upto divine transcendence and his life reflected divine immanence. His advent may be called the most significant event of the modern history of the world. Though his life was lived in the seclusion of an Indian temple, today the whole world bears witness to the great life he lived and the lofty message he taught.

The birth of Sri Ramakrishna marks the beginning of the modern Hindu Renaissance. He may be said to be its prophet. His life represented the entire orbit of Hinduism and not a mere segment of it. It is said that the beauty of the *Bhāgavatam* increased manifold as it issued from the mouth of Śuka. Likewise it can be said of Hinduism, that the eternal religion gained in force and profundity as it expressed itself through the life and personality of Sri Ramakrishna. He has not only relived and re-charged Hinduism but also re-evaluated it. In him Hinduism not only came into its boundless own, but transcended itself.

His sole mission in life was to awaken humanity from its spiritual slumber to the wonder of the kingdom of God which he had seen and to which all the scriptures of the world bear witness. Romain Rolland says: 'Sri Ramakrishna represents the culmination of the spiritual life of three hundred million Hindus for two thousand years.' We may say that he represents the realization of all the spiritual potentialities of mankind for all time to come. He has achieved singly what humanity has yet to achieve collectively. God has manifested in Sri Ramakrishna what He has in Him to manifest. While there is not a single spiritual experience in the spiritual literature of the world which Sri Ramakrishna could not call his own, there are his innumerable spiritual realizations which the world has yet to understand. His is an expansive life of spiritual experiences ranging from divine visions—visions of Gods and Goddesses—and divine ecstacies to utter absorption in the Absolute. His spiritual genius was colossal. His zest for spiritual adventures was inexhaustible. The extraordinary purity of his mind and life was the bed-rock of all his spiritual adventures, explorations and attainments. Sri Aurobindo says: 'In the life of Sri Ramakrishna, we see a colossal spiritual capacity for diving straight to the divine realization, taking as it were, the kingdom of heaven by violence.' Realization and possession of God in all His myriad glory was the only goal of his life.

Sri Ramakrishna is a unique example of divine crystallization in a human form in the history of the world. He is the assimilation of all the previous Incarnations and also the inexhaustible potential for all the Incarnations of the future. He has shown that Incarnations are not an anachronism, but an ever-recurring phenomenon. So long as there is a merciful God to save and a suffering humanity to be saved, Incarnations will continue to be born. Incarnations are an indication of Divine concern for erring and suffering humanity.

For Sri Ramakrishna sincere and intense yearning for God and not seeking God is the way of self-fulfilment in God. The sincerity and intensity of yearning determines the pace of self-fulfilment. Greater the intensity and extensity of yearning, sooner will be the realization of the bliss of God. Yearning for God was the central theme of his life and message. He yearned for God and God came to him and filled his being. He yearned for the Absolute and the Absolute engulfed him. He yearned for disciples and devotees. They came and shared in his bounty of God. He yearned for the kingdom of God on earth; it descended and spread around him.

According to Sri Ramakrishna, to those who yearn for God He comes unsought. Sincere yearning is all the *sādhana* that is required for a vision of God. Where there is intense yearning, seeking is superfluous. Where there is no intense yearning, seeking is of no avail. Sādhana is more a process of hungering for God than going in search of Him. When yearning for God becomes the all-embracing and absorbing objective and interest of life, nay, when yearning for God becomes the very condition of one's life and existence, when nothing is left of a man but his all-consuming hunger and thirst for God, God *comes* to him and fills him with all His beatitudes. There never was a godly-man so mad after God or a worldly man so mad after the world as Sri Ramakrishna was after God.

If yearning is the condition for God's self-revelation, faith in God is what generates and sustains yearning. There can be no genuine yearning where there is no faith. Faith is different from mere belief. Faith is a form of knowledge. It is the first step to enlightenment. It is like the light at dawn that heralds the rising sun.

It is traditional to bring the Divine within the fold of human relationship or to confer a divine status on a human being for the sake of worship. To look upon God as one's own mother or to look upon one's mother as the Mother of the Universe is nothing new in religious history. But to look upon one's own wife as the manifestation of the Divine Mother and to worship her as such, as Sri Ramakrishna did, has something peculiarly sublime and transcendental about it. It is something unprecedented in history. It pre-supposes, on the part of the *sādhaka,* the highest sublimation of the physical element and a total assimilation of the spiritual. If, to look upon God as mother is the first step, to see and worship the Divine Mother in one's own wife is the last word in spiritual life. This is possible only for Incarnations. To Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother was not a mere wife. She was the very embodiment of the Divine Mother. To him, the Divine Mother, his earthly mother and his wife were all one. Worship of Holy Mother as Divine Mother by Sri Ramakrishna was a great event in Holy Mother's life. It awakened in her, the mood of Motherhood of God which was latent in her and to manifest which alone, she had come down to earth.

Sri Ramakrishna's relation with Divine Mother was three-fold as that of Hanuman with Sri Rama. When he was in a knowledge-predominant mood, he felt himself one with Her; when in a mood of exuberant love, he felt himself to be a child of the Divine Mother and when in a state of utter surrender, he felt Divine Mother to be everything and himself nothing.

To Sri Ramakrishna, God was the one fact of Reality. Everything else was real on account of God. In his eyes, nothing was unreal for nothing was apart from God. If anything was unreal and to be rejected as such, it was the feeling that something is apart from God. A sense of alienation from God is all the ignorance that exists and that is responsible for all the misery and bondage of humanity. To Sri Ramakrishna, everything from the Impersonal Absolute to the material world was one mass of Reality. The Impersonal Absolute, the Personal God and the world—all are one order of reality though they belong to different modes of being. The same Impersonal Absolute has become the Personal God and the world. The same Reality assumes different manifestations, at different levels of being. The Impersonal Absolute may be a higher mode of being than the Personal God; but for that reason the Absolute is not more real than the latter. Realness of the Reality is the same in both the modes of being. Sri Ramakrishna says, 'When I think of the Supreme Being as inactive, neither creating nor preserving nor destroying, I call Him Brahman or Purusha, the Impersonal God. When I think of Him as active, creating, preserving and destroying I call Her Śakti, or Māyā or Prakṛti, the Personal God. But the distinction between them does not mean difference. The Impersonal and the Personal are the same Being like milk and its whiteness or diamond and its lustre or the serpent and its undulations. It is impossible to conceive the one without the other. The Divine Mother and Brahman are one.' The transcendent and the immanent are one. To his clear vision the difference between the Personal and the Impersonal was no more than that between ice and water. The Formless appeared before his pure mind through divine forms. The Formless Absolute becomes crystallized into Personal under the spell of devotion and the Personal God becomes the Impersonal Absolute under the blazing fire of knowledge.

Sri Ramakrishna did not preach any new religion or any new Truth. Neither did he come to destroy or merely to imitate the spiritual traditions of the past. He came to fulfil them. According to him the religions of the world are not contradictory or antagonistic. They are but various phases of the one Eternal Religion. He taught that every religion is an authentic path to Truth and that Truth is boundless. Variety of faiths has enriched the world and made religion accessible to all men. While Truth is very old, every experience of Truth is very new. Every experience of Truth adds to the knowledge and joy of God. Truth is so infinite that not even infinite ways of experiencing It can exhaust It quantitatively or qualitatively. While every experience of God is novel and unique in its own way, while every experience of Truth is a fresh insight into Truth and highly self-satisfying and self-fulfilling, no experience contains the whole of Truth. But, one experience of Truth is sufficient to liberate a man for all time to come, for every such experience is so full of God. It was left to Sri Ramakrishna's genius to follow each religion, each discipline to its full fruition and then to have integrated all that experience into a rare synthesis unknown to history. Sri Ramakrishna was the master magician of synthesis. It is Sri Ramakrishna's special contribution to discover by personal experience that though every religion is a unique experience in itself, there is sufficient unity and unanimity in all experiences to show that the God of one religion is the God of every other religion.

Sri Ramakrishna has his own enlightening contributions to make to the concepts and contents of Jñāna, Bhakti and Karma. Sri Ramakrishna's conception of knowledge is called *Vijñāna* meaning *jñāna par excellence.* Traditionally, jñāna is understood to be knowledge of God either in his personal aspect or impersonal aspect. But *vijñāna* is neither mere knowledge of the Personal God nor knowledge of the Impersonal Absolute. It includes both and implies much more. It is to experience the Impersonal Absolute, to realize the Personal God. Compared to the concept of vijñāna, traditional views of jñāna, both the idealistic and the theistic, are sheer ignorance or at best imperfect. The world and the Personal God may be felt as veils to the Absolute by an idealist before the dawn of *vijñāna.* But with the birth of *vijñāna,* they will be known to be the manifestations of the Absolute. To a theist, the Formless Absolute may appear to be a myth; but to a *vijñāni,* It is not only a fact equal in reality to the Personal God, but also one with it. *Vijñāna* is beyond *jñāna* and *ajñāna.*

Sri Ramakrishna says that selfless action leads to God. But it is too difficult for the people of the Kaliyuga for they are too much rooted in body which is their self and life. So Sri Ramakrishna reveals a new aspect of Karma. To him, Karma is more an expression of love for God than a discharge of duty. It is more a giving of oneself to God than giving up of results. Work is worship. Work is the worship of the Divine in man. The inner content of karma is devotion to God. When there is love for God, surrender of ego and results automatically follow. Karma is not an act of mercy or charity which is an expression of pity for man. But, it is love of the Divine in Man. Absolutely selfless love based on purely human considerations is very hard to grow. Only the Divine can efface the ego. Work as worship is a direct path to God.

Traditionally Bhakti is understood to be single-minded love of God in His Personal aspect. It is believed that Bhakti results in a vision of the Personal God. But Sri Ramakrishna says that Bhakti has profounder potentialities. If the Bhakta yearns intensely for a realization of the Formless Absolute, God, as an act of grace grants it to him. So, Bhakti has a transcendental aspect also. Love of the Absolute is its nature.

Sri Ramakrishna is the symphony supreme in which Jñāna, Bhakti, Karma and Yoga harmoniously blend. He is the synthesis *par excellence* in which different world-views are integrated. He is an ocean in which various streams of *sādhana* flow and mingle.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND INDIAN CULTURE

SWAMI PREMESHANANDA

IX

A comprehensive ideal of liberation was first placed before the country by Gautama Buddha. But very rare are the people who really hanker after liberation. People sometimes make a pretence as seekers after liberation but virtually do not practise anything. The result has been that India reached the depth of her degradation. Today man cannot even think of liberation. On the other hand our teachers have taught us only to seek freedom if we desired peace and blessedness. But desire for freedom does not arise in one unless one has some satiation of one's worldly hankerings either in this birth or in one's previous lives. But the condition of India when Sri Ramakrishna came was such that people had not only no enjoyment but most of them were reduced to the status of untouchables. First, therefore, there was to be a physical regeneration of the whole nation before it could understand his message. So Sri Ramakrishna left the onerous duty of preaching the message of renunciation and liberation to his illustrious disciple Swami Vivekananda.

Swamiji in his book *East and West* has explained in a most lucid manner the truth of the Eternal Religion. Besides, in our land the idea of liberation has been repeatedly stressed for more than 2500 years now. Sri Śankara also preached the gospel of liberation. Sri Ramanuja added *bhakti* (devotion) with its ultimate goal of salvation to help men proceed along the way. Sri Chaitanya gave to the common man of India the ideal of reaching the Lord through Nama Japa. Sri Ramakrishna combined the disciplines of the paths of *bhakti* and *mukti* into one. But it is beyond the capacity of the common man to lead such a life. For where is the person who had demonstrated in his life the supreme conquest of lust even when sharing the same bed with his wife month after month? His life therefore is unapproachable, too high for an ordinary man to understand or imitate.

We find in Swamiji's life a complete ideal of humanity. By man we understand the aggregate of the gross and subtle bodies along with the Conscious principle, with the *annamaya, prāṇamaya, manomaya* and *vijñānamaya* sheaths under his control and who can enjoy this world to the full. In ancient India the boys, during their student days, *brahmacharya āshrama*, received such a training of the body and the mind that the education could be useful to them in later life in all their spheres of action. That was why there was a more stable balance and perfect growth in the householder's life in those days. That was why there were great yogis also among the householders.

Now, the dexterity in action as well as the dynamism that we notice in the life of Swamiji is fit to be the ideal of man's life. As a boy Swamiji was once witnessing a lathi performance (stick play) in a fair. He followed the play and by his keen observation found its secret. Sometime after he took a stick from one of the players and challenged one of their champions and defeated him. Later on in America when he was standing on a bridge across a river he saw a few boys practising firing with their guns aimed at some floating egg-shells. But none of the shots hit the target. When Swamiji smiled at their unsuccessful attempts, they challenged him to prove his skill. Swamiji took a gun from them and at the very first attempt successfully hit those floating egg-shells. The boys were wonder-struck at this and thought that Swamiji was a practised hand in gunmanship, whereas actually it was the first time that Swamiji had ever handled a gun. This dexterity and concentration in action is really the goal of all education. Today why do we see slovenliness and lack of enthusiasm in action everywhere? Is it not the absence of a man-making education that is at its root?

Whenever we think of Swamiji's resourcefulness in work we are reminded of many of the incidents in his life. His contemporaries stand witness to his extraordinary knowledge of the theory as well as the skill on the practical side of the musical science. He excelled in cooking too. In short, whatever work he undertook he did it quite successfully with his whole heart and mind concentrated on it.

Sri Ramakrishna was a first class painter and a good sculptor. Swamiji had no chance to take up either of these two but as an art critic he had no peer. His reflections on the sculptures and paintings that he came across in his wanderings give us an inkling into his sharp intelligence and keen appreciative faculty.

Those who had been in his company during his tours were all wonder-struck by his profound knowledge and descriptions of the historic happenings of the different places. So minute and detailed were the narrations that the listeners felt as if Swamiji was reporting what he actually witnessed. One wonders at his imaginative faculty which could bring to life past incidents in every detail and so picturesquely.

As a literary genius he has left a grand record in his English, Bengali and Sanskrit writings. Language followed him like a servant in whatever he wanted to express.

Normally we discuss about Swamiji's oratorical powers. His style and language enthralled the audience. In informal talks he was an excellent humourist. His skill in dealing with persons and his sweet manners in the societies of both his own country and the West drew admiration from one and all. To live in society and make one's mark, it is essential that one must have sufficient knowledge of the society in which he moves. But for sanyasins, according to the traditional rules, anything other than the knowledge of the scriptures or God is undesirable. For knowledge of the many is considered as an impediment in the path of liberation. Yet he who has to be the leader of society, must be an all-round and fully developed personality. Sri Ramakrishna said that an ordinary pen knife is enough to kill oneself, but to fight an enemy a sword and a shield are necessary. Sri Ramakrishna moulded Swamiji to represent a comprehensive ideal of man everywhere so that he could preach Sri Ramakrishna's ideal to every one. Again there is the grand exhortation of Sri Ramakrishna: 'Act in accordance with place, time and person.' How alert one must be to put this instruction into practice, can be seen in Swamiji's life. If we do not cultivate our life in consonance with that of Swamiji's it is not possible to transform ourselves into the ideal man of Sri Ramakrishna's conception.

X

The truth behind this world and behind man's life were discovered by the sages of this country. Society in olden days, was organized on the basis of the experience of the Ultimate Reality, by the sages. The goal of the Sanatana Dharma, Eternal Religion, was to protect and sublimate human life. The sages realized that four types of men were essential if man's goal, i.e. man's being and becoming, was to be accomplished. These four types existed in society even from the prehistoric times. The first necessity was of such people who could think and arrive at 'what led to good and what made for evil'. If we try we can even now find this type of people. Second were required people who were resourceful and intelligent to grasp the ideal put forward by the first group and put it into practice. These two types of people were designated as Brahmins and Kshatriyas by the sages. Another necessity of society was protection and preservation of its members. For this two other types of people were required, one group for carrying on agriculture, animal husbandry and trade, and the other group for carrying on physical labour, viz., weavers to spin and weave cloth, masons to build houses and dig tanks etc. and supply the needs of society. These were called Vaiśyas and Śudras.

Due to the different forces, national and social, interacting on the society the Brahmins lost their creative genius. Kshatriyas for the same reason lost their vitality. The Vaiśyas too, under torture, became slaves to the foreign ruler and the last group due to poverty were reduced to near automatons. In brief, only in the Brahmins a little vitality was left while all other groups were reduced to the lowest status, that of slaves, for want of food and means of livelihood.

At this critical juncture of our national life Sri Ramakrishna by his sudden advent brought to light again the Highest knowledge. And Vivekananda by taking birth in an almost dying race of Kshatriyas gave a scheme and chalked out a path for the rejuvenation of India. India had never fallen on such bad days before and it needed all the strength it could muster up to lift itself. That is why Brahman's full power manifested in its completeness in Sri Ramakrishna and through Vivekananda was made known to all people.

XI

In India we have had the idea of spiritual freedom for a long time, but there was no developed system for attaining material welfare. About the ultimate view of Reality (Brahma Vidya) Sri Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita :

येषां त्वन्तगतं पापं जनानां पुण्यकर्मणाम् ।
ते द्वन्द्वमोहनिर्मुक्ता भजन्ते मां दृढव्रताः ॥

'Only those of virtuous actions who are completely cleansed of all their sins are freed from the delusion of dualities and worship Me with determination.' Such people only can have a taste for spiritual life. But to come to this state, it requires myriads of births commencing from that of an insect. It is a long struggle and a prolonged experience of the world. When this wheel of experience comes to an end, then calmness and placidity arise in the mind, which in its turn induces the individual to think of the well-being of everyone. This is the natural culmination of an individual's life. All must come to it in the long run. But if one is able to follow the path shown by the Rishis, the goal can be attained more speedily. In the Vedas treading this path is alone called 'Dharma', righteousness; which is, however, sadly absent today.

Such terms as attainment of knowledge and bhakti etc. are very common in our country, but they are rarely attained. Man thinks himself blessed if he is happy in this world and assured of enjoyment in the next. It can safely be remarked that majority of people do not want anything more than this. Sri Krishna says, 'Among thousands rarely one strives for realization.' He continues, 'among the seekers again, an occasional one only knows Me rightly.' It means that attainment of real knowledge is difficult for the common man. If, however, it is possible for anyone by craving for the Highest Knowledge to arouse in himself a little desire for it and sustain it and then realize God, the Highest, that one will be able to uplift mankind as a whole. It is for this reason that great men have held before humanity lofty ideals. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'I have done sixteen parts, you do at least one part and you will attain your ideal.' That is, if one attempts to travel on this path of spirituality even a little the upward march is automatically begun. Sri Krishna has delineated the end and aim of this journey as follows :

बहूनां जन्मनामन्ते ज्ञानवान् मां प्रपद्यते ।
वासुदेवः सर्वमिति स महात्मा सुदुर्लभः ॥

'At the end of several births the jñāni comes to Me. But rare is the person who knows Me, Vasudeva, as everything.' In secular life we have the example of education. Though very few students are competent for research study yet what efforts are not made and what expenditure is not incurred for the spread of education! As the school education is a stepping stone to a college career and thence to the life in the world, similarly religious education is an attempt to put man on the path of *Mukti*, freedom. Lastly, as in the case of research students we have specialised study, so in the case of God realization or salvation we have *sannyasa*. This is the secret of the structure of our society planned in accordance with Brahma Vidya, so that ultimately the goal is achieved.

Sri Ramakrishna realized the Ultimate Truth in various aspects. He realized the whole Truth in its completeness. Swamiji has given us a scheme by which mankind may traverse this path. He has also laid down the disciplines by which we could accomplish the end. By preaching Vedanta to the affluent West Swamiji has removed all the impediments in the Western man's way of following the path. He encouraged the poverty-stricken millions of India to strive for material uplift. Simultaneously with Swamiji's preaching of Vedanta in America he had tried to obtain American aid, to establish technical educational institutions in India.

We all know that sannyasins did not involve themselves in things other than spiritual pursuits. Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna also asked us to remain always absorbed in the contemplation of God. But Swamiji, in his rules for the guidance of the Ramakrishna Order, has enjoined on the monks to conduct technical institutes for the economic growth of the nation, along with their pursuit of Brahma Vidya. Those who have no knowledge of Indian history and culture may not understand this effort of Swamiji. For this was the religion in India in bygone days, viz., attainment of the highest good at the end of a well lived life. Neither this world nor the other was neglected by religion. Swamiji, therefore, organized an order known as the Ramakrishna Mission to undertake the development of man in all his aspects, spiritual and material.

(*To be continued*)

It is culture that withstands shocks, not a simple mass of knowledge. You can put a mass of knowledge into the world, but that will not do it much good. There must come culture into the blood. We all know in modern times, of nations which have masses of knowledge, but what of them? They are like tigers, they are like savages, because culture is not there. Knowledge is only skin-deep, as civilization is, and a little scratch brings out the old savage. Such things happen; this is the danger. Teach the masses in the vernaculars, give them ideas; they will get information, but something more is necessary; give them culture. Until you give them that, there can be no permanence in the raised condition of the masses.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

VIVEKANANDA'S ROLE IN THE EPIC OF HUMANITY

R. RAMAKRISHNAN

The year-long celebrations in India and abroad in connection with the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda have just drawn to a close, and it is worthwhile at this juncture to make an appraisal of Vivekananda's place and function in world history. To us of today who either have been his contemporaries or are of the generation immediately next to his, the Swami has a special appeal, and we have every right to congratulate ourselves on the fact of having co-lived with him or of having harvested his first crop. But it is necessary in the interests of a long vision and a true perspective to remember that Vivekananda's work does not merely relate to one particular chapter of Time, though of course his mission had very much to do with contemporary conditions and affairs. The fact is that greatness is of two kinds. One kind of greatness is of the hour, the other is of all time. There are men of high distinction who dare and do things which astonish the world and also benefit mankind, and these deserve all honour and grateful remembrance. But their work fades out on their passing away or soon after. These are like meteors flitting across the sky in luminous and dazzling splendour, but have no future. There are others whose earthly existence is no measure of the longevity of their message, who like the sun and stars know no dimming and abide for ever. To this second category belongs Vivekananda. He lived amidst men for a bare forty years and his public life was of a short span of only nine years. But he belongs to the ages. His mission is of eternal significance and undying potency, and is capable of limitless expansion. His birth centenary is but the child's first *abdapoorti*, as it were, which is celebrated when the baby is just twelve months old and has a long future of growth before it. Vivekananda's place in history is not therefore of this century or that, this epoch or that. Rooted in hoary wisdom, and acting upon and acted on by current needs and challenges, he opens out his branches to the future and its endless achievements. He is a tribute to mankind's golden past, is a grand proof of its latent virility of today, and is a sure guarantee of the as yet unsuspected mighty possibilities of its gorgeous tomorrows.

The impact of his life may be studied from three angles — his influence on the individual human being, his impress on his motherland and the pressure of his personality on the world at large.

A Kingmaker

To the individual human being Vivekananda represents the Promised Land. The Swami is a veritable flame of the Cosmic Spirit. He is one who is cast in perfection's mould. He is the acme of human talent in all its manifold richness. He is the paragon of the *Homo Sapiens.* Gifted with a physique which may well be the envy of the god of beauty, endowed with muscles of iron and nerves of steel, equipped with feet capable of globe-trotting and with sinewy arms capable of turning the national wheel and with enthralling eyes which charm and hold the perceived, he strikes everybody as one who is born to redeem and elevate. He is a savant with high intellectual powers and a sublime understanding, one to whom knowledge comes but wisdom does not linger. His heart is the most dominant part of his being, and is that of a Saviour showering grace on all. His soul encased in a bright human frame has links with supernal regions of shadowless luminosity. His message to man is a call to the noblest and best. Man to him is that God whom the ignorant call man. Man to him is a child of light and immortal bliss. Man is the Infinite Dreamer dreaming finite dreams. To him man progresses not from error to truth, but from truth that is lower to truth that is higher. The sinner to him is but a potential saint. Man in his eyes sins not, but only errs, and so there is no place for that sense of doom and damnation which sin connotes; error can easily be righted and the truth clearly perceived. Vivekananda is thus the great apostle of human dignity and the great pathfinder to human destiny. He is the philosopher of the common man, the prophet not of the upper few, but of the multitude. Any so-called secular work is to him as sacred as worship, and service to man is verily adoration of the Divine. He makes man self-aware; he helps man feel tangibly his soulful magnificence; he dispels every delusion of man's insignificance and nothingness. In his social economy the scavenger sweeping the dusty road is as much a dignified and indispensable limb of the community as the sovereign on the throne. His greatest service to man is the redemption his message ensures, the redemption from the self-hypnotism of meanness. The Vivekananda contact is a sure upward pull to any man towards the majesty and omnipotence of his own soul. In the kingdom of the spirit Vivekananda is a king and a kingmaker; he re-enthrones man on his selfhood. Vivekananda's life is a vast commentary on the aphoristic assertion of his Master, Sri Ramakrishna, *Jiva is Śiva*. In words reminiscent of Vedic brilliance and Upanishadic sublimity he has proclaimed the charter of the Human Spirit:

> 'Each soul is potentially divine. The goal is to manifest this divine within, by controlling nature, external and internal. Do this either by work, or worship, or psychic control, or philosophy, by one, or more, or all of these — and be free. This is the whole of religion. Doctrines or dogmas or rituals or books or temples or forms are but secondary details.'

Here in a nutshell is all philosophy, all religious effort. In Vivekananda's vision no man is lost or damned. Every one is assured of succour and salvation. In his message is no whining or weeping. It is all a cheerful affirmation of wholeness. Life is therefore a joyous adventure, every doing is a *sadhana*. In his clarion call *Arise, awake and stop not till the goal is reached* we find a *mahamantra* uttered to every pilgrim on life's highway, calling on every marcher not to despair, not to slumber, but to keep moving, each from his place and on his way, with the certainty of reaching the goal. Vivekananda's greatest service lies in his bringing *Swarajya* (self-sovereignty) to every man and woman.

A Re-awakener

If Vivekananda was great as an awakener of souls he was no less striking as a countryman and a patriot. His advent synchronised with a period in India's history when the motherland appeared to have become old and effete; her old glory seemed to have gone and she was ridiculed and slandered by every half-knower and unknower. Politically enslaved, economically exploited and culturally starved, India seemed to be sinking into oblivion. But India's high destiny is to live on as the spiritual sustainer of the world. This was not known to many foreigners and even to many Indians of the time. But no effete decaying India could have produced a Ramakrishna. The life and austerities of the Paramahamsa showed that India was still virile and sound, that the Ganges of her national genius flowed in as full a flood as ever. At the feet of Ramakrishna, Vivekananda learnt wherein lay India's strength and individuality. Ramakrishna perhaps did not mention India in the word outpourings of his blossomed heart, but he was the finest efflorescence of the Indian spirit. Vivekananda was the one man who unlike others of his time was in no way apologetic about India. His fiery patriotism was not a mere political upsurge or a reformist heave of the emotional self. It was genuine *desa bhakti* — ardent devotion to the Motherland. As a highly sensible and keenly sensitive youth he had lived in Calcutta, the stronghold of foreign domination, and his heart must have bled many times over the subjugation of India by the arrogant alien rulers. But he knew that as had happened many times before, India would conquer her conquerors. (And he himself was the first sign of the turn of the tide.) His travels through India as a wandering monk helped him come in contact with every phase of the national life, and his experiences culminated in his long meditation and planning out of his life's mission at Kanyakumari. His contribution to the national renaissance was many-sided, but chiefly it consisted in the rediscovery and reassertion of the national ideals viz. Renunciation and Service. His emphasis on the imperative need for elevating the women and the people has been at the back of all the ameliorative measures we see in the country today. His momentous step of yoking the institution of monkhood to the wheel of socially reconstructive work opened a new chapter in the history of Indian monasticism even as it strengthened social service with a high motivation. The Ramakrishna Mission which he organized is a wonderful combination of self-effort leading to self-liberation and work leading to the world's welfare. In Vivekananda the Indian people saw the majestic face of their own motherland, in his voice they recognized the call of India's guardian sages, and in his labours they perceived the muscular movements of a reawakened India. Always poised on the Infinite as he was, he was yet able to utter 'The very dust of India is holy to me'. As Sister Nivedita points out, among the three elements of his make-up one was the motherland, the other two being the Guru and the Śastras—his Master (who was the fulfilment of the Indian Sages), and the scriptures (which are not books in the ordinary sense, but verbal expressions of undying truths realized in the immensity of the soul). If Vivekananda ever sighed or wept it was over India's condition of his times. He literally foresaw and joyously proclaimed India's resurgeant glory.

> 'The Indian nation cannot be killed; deathless it stands.
>
> Shall India die? Then from the world all spirituality will be extinct ... Such a thing can never be. Understand that India is still living because she has her quota yet to give to the general store of the world's civilization.
>
> A wonderful, glorious, future India will come — a greater India than ever was.
>
> Arise, awake and see her seated there on her eternal throne, rejuvenated, more glorious than she ever was — this motherland of ours.'

And once in what must have been a rare mood of self-revelation he styled himself 'A condensed India.'

A Universal Man

Ardent patriot as he was, Vivekananda was in no sense a narrow nationalist. He was a universalist and cosmopolitan of the highest order. If he was intensely Indian he could easily transcend India too and be one with all humanity. 'Truth is my God, and the universe my country', declared he. He was as much at home in the fashionable cities of the West as in lonely Indian forests, and in both the regions he was ever his own self. When in his early days in America he was without the needed money and had no hope of accomplishing anything useful there, the Hindu monk could say with confidence, 'I am here amongst the children of the Son of Mary and the Lord Jesus will help me.' When he stood on the platform of the Parliament of Religions at Chicago and surveyed the many hundreds assembled before him the first words which came out of his mouth were 'Sisters and Brothers of America'. And the religion he preached was the Creed of Man, the Faith of the Soul, not this or that ism. His Vedanta and his yoga were for all. Vedanta, he said, will be the future religion of thinking humanity. Raja Yoga, he affirmed, 'never asks the question what our religion is, whether we are Deists, or Athiests, whether Christians, Jews or Buddhists; we are human beings, that is sufficient.' And the last words he spoke to the Parliament of Religions (Help and not fight, Assimilation and not destruction, Harmony and peace and not dissension) were only a variant of the time-honoured *OM Śantih, Śantih, Śantih* of Indian scriptures. He could transgress geographical control, and transport to the Thousand Island Park on the St. Lawrence river the severe atmosphere of an Ashrama on the bank of the Ganges. And sitting in the heart of America he could burst into the Song of the Sanyasin, so very suggestive of an Upaniṣadic Tapovan. He could feel for the American Negro as much tenderness as he could feel for the downtrodden masses in India. When he landed in England he was not without bitter thoughts of England's wrongs to India. But it did not take many days for England to win his heart's affection, and he could transform a West-born and West-bred Miss Margaret Noble into a more Indian than any Indian-born Bharata sevika. He was thus a bridge between nations. His temple universal was all-inclusive. He affirmed his faith in these words :

> 'I accept all religions that were in the past and worship with them all ; I worship God with every one of them, in whatever form they worship Him. I shall go to the mosque of the Mohammedan ; I shall enter the Christian's church and kneel before the crucifix ; I shall enter the Buddhist temple, where I shall take refuge in Buddha and in his law ; I shall go into the forest and sit down in meditation with the Hindu who is trying to see the light which enlightens the heart of every one. Not only shall I do all these but I shall keep my heart open for all that may come in the future . . . Salutation to all the prophets of the past, to all the great ones of the present, and to all that are to come in the future !'

In saying all this he was truly a disciple of his Master who in himself was a whole Parliament of Religions. He was, in saying all this, also truly Indian, for India has always stressed Universal good. *Swadeśo bhuvana trayam, trailokyam mangalam kuru* (The three worlds are my homeland, do what is auspicious unto all the three worlds) — such has been the Indian way of well-wishing.

In his irresistible Pied Piper call to the individual soul to assert and get established in Divinity, in his heralding a new age of glory for the Motherland, in his propounding a Gospel of Humanity which is valid and operative from pole to pole — Vivekananda makes us think of the constellation Great Bear (Saptarishi mandala) whose pointers always and in all positions lead us, sky gazers, to the Polestar. The way of Vivekananda is at once the way to self-perfection, to national welfare and to world-betterment.

THE IMPORT OF YOGA IN THE GITA

K. P. S. CHOUDHARY

Of a truth, there were giants in our blessed country — giants perhaps far more numerous in the intellectual, moral and spiritual realms than in the physical realm — whose commentaries and serious discourses on religious topics embody such historical and exegetic information as could hardly be added to by the best of modern writers. And yet the moderns, starting from and availing themselves of the wealth of information bequeathed by the ancients have made their own magnificent and mighty contributions to the treasures gathered for us by them.

The definitions of Yoga as given in the Gita, in our opinion, can well be interpreted in the modern context of life without in any way deviating from the original intention and purpose of the scripture. They have universal application irrespective of time and place and an attempt to re-interpret them is, to my mind, worthwhile.

In order to understand Yoga as defined in the various senses in the Gita, it is necessary and desirable for a man who seeks liberation to know (i) how Yoga has been defined elsewhere (ii) what purpose does Yoga serve ? and (iii) if it can be practised by every normal man.

Etymologically Yoga means yoke. Etymologically as also literally, it means union. According to Patanjali, it is *citta vṛtti nirodha*. Let us start with Yoga as yoke — an instrument to connect oxen to the plough. In a crude but comprehensive way, it brings out the underlying idea of breaking in or training of undisciplined, unregulated and uninstructed souls.

Basically, Yoga is the 'union' of the individual self with the higher Self or God. This point deserves to be considered carefully. The words 'identity' and 'union' are used so loosely that they need a little clarification. The term 'identity' is used in many senses. In traditional logic it is expressed in the formula—'A is A'. This is known as the 'Law of Identity'. This formulation, in our opinion, is ambiguous because of the various possible meanings of the copula. If 'A is A' means the subject is identical with the predicate, it then becomes a tautologous assertion and if it makes no assertion, it is no judgment. So we may suggest that 'A is A' becomes a real proposition if it is interpreted not as bare identity but as 'identity in difference' which is expressed, 'A is both A and not—A'. In other words, A is both identical and different from A. It is identical in so far as both terms are the same, i.e. 'A'; and it asserts difference in so far as one 'A' is the subject and the other 'A' is the predicate. Likewise, the finite self is both identical and different from the Infinite. It is identical in the sense that he is potentially divine and infinite; it is also different from the Infinite because he is not thereby merged, absorbed or annihilated in the Infinite.

Now the meaning of the word 'union' is also not free from ambiguity. In one sense we may mean by 'union' of 'A with B' that they cease to be distinct beings. When we say that there is union of two rivers, it means that there is only one river. In another sense again it may mean that when we say that there is union of 'X' with 'Y' then they do not become identical with each other but only closely associated with each other. They do not cease to be two distinct individuals. To illustrate this we cannot do better than refer to Ruysbroeck, the great Christian mystic of the 14th century, who says: 'As the air is penetrated by the brightness and heat of the sun, and iron is penetrated by fire, so that it works through fire the works of fire, since it burns and shines like fire; . . . yet each of these keeps its own nature. For the fire does not become iron, and iron does not become fire . . . There is here a great distinction, for the creature never becomes God, nor does God ever become the creature.' Obviously 'identity-in-difference' is expressed here. In so far as iron has been dissolved in the fire and has ceased to exist itself, it is identical with fire but the hot iron does not become fire because iron is iron, so it is different. Similarly, inasmuch as a mystic, or for the matter of that, a yogin has been united with the Infinite and has ceased to exist as a separate individual, he is identical with the Infinite; but inasmuch as he still feels that he, like Rama, Shyama and others experiences peace, still retains his independent status and is distinct from the Infinite. Finite and Infinite are not existentially identical.

From the above it is clear that practically there is very little difference between 'identity' and 'union'. We, however, feel inclined to use the term 'union' in connection with Yoga in the sense of identity-in-difference. The relation between the finite and the Infinite, in our opinion, is the relation of identity-in-difference. Yogic union is the transfiguration or total transformation of the mystic's personality and in the state of transfiguration, what is annihilated is the egoity or the sense of separateness and not the person himself. He is not sunk.

In the Gita it has been clearly stated 'As he sees the Lord present, equally everywhere, he does not kill his true Self by the self (*na hinasti ātmanātmānaṁ*) and therefore attains to the supreme goal.'[1] It is, therefore, wrong to maintain that the mystic who has attained the highest state and shares his all with all other beings has thereby lost his personality, and becomes less of a person than another who has built a wall round his individuality. The higher state of the yogic state may fitly be called the state of mystic cosmism. It, therefore, follows that in the context of the Yoga of the Gita the term

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[1] *Gita*, XIII. 28.

'union' has a special meaning. And that meaning is the realization of 'each is there All and All is each,' which is possible through the practice of *samatva*; and in a state of union the *sādhaka's* personality remains intact.

Yet, in the Gita the word Yoga appears to have been used in many senses, which may seem to be unconnected with one another; it may not, however, be quite impossible to discover relations among them. In Chapter II, verse 50, it is said, *yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam* (Yoga is skill in action). In the same Chapter, verse 48, it is said, *samatvaṁ yoga ucyate* (equilibrium is called Yoga). In Chapter VI, verses 2 and 23 respectively, it is said, *yaṁ saṁnyāsam iti prāhur yogaṁ taṁ viddhi pāṇḍava'* (That which is called renunciation, know thou that as Yoga, Oh Pandava); and again *taṁ vidyād duhkhasaṁyoga — viyogaṁ yogasaṁjñitaṁ* (That should be known by the name of Yoga: this disconnection from the union with pain).

The questions that immediately arise are: (i) Whether the definitions given in the Gita are consistent with other definitions? (ii) Is each definition exclusive of the other? (iii) If they mean one and the same thing, why there should be so many definitions? The confusion and difficulty are susceptible of being removed if we add one more definition: Yoga is a 'means' by which Godhead is realized.

In this view of the matter, it is quite plain that Godhead can be realized in diverse ways. If that be so, then it is neither confusing nor difficult to understand that each definition lays stress on some particular 'mode' of Yoga. Each definition will be found in the light of this exposition to possess a special significance and in the end we shall be led to see that Yoga, when applied to or practised in accordance with a particular system, acquires a new meaning or definition. The Yoga of the Bhakta (devotee) is different. So it will be seen that be it Bhakti, Gñāna, Laya, Mantra or any other system, Yoga forms an essential basis and means of realization of the goal, but in combination with each, it puts on a different complexion and means something different.

As we go on, now, dealing separately with the four definitions given in the Gita, we shall eventually see not only the distinction between the different systems but also the synthesis of Yoga. In the course of our investigation a discovery will be made that all forms of Yoga have different places and purposes in the scheme of evolution of man and the definitions are neither inconsistent with one another nor exclusive of one another.

At once we are up against the most vital question as to what is the aim and purpose of human existence in the evolutionary scheme of creation. Every right thinking person has emphasized 'emancipation' to be the aim and purpose of our life. And the escape, achievement, liberation or realization, whichever term is used, can be brought about by Yoga alone. If this view is accepted, then the second question posed in the beginning is answered, viz. that Yoga not only serves a purpose but that the ultimate and supreme purpose of human life is not served except by Yoga, whatever the form of Yoga may be.

The third question is if it can be practised by every normal man? — along with the several definitions of Yoga. Be it noted, however, that God cannot be partial to anyone.[2] If he is everything and everything has to find its fulfilment in becoming one with Him, then it must be assumed that liberation or realization is the birthright of every *jivātmā* (individual soul). It is accelerated or retarded or impeded by the application or non-application or improper or imperfect application of the means, i.e. Yoga. Many definitions only go to show that there are many means or methods available to man for his final deliverance or *mokṣa* and that a particular means or method alone is required to be used according to a particular system. Thus, it is obvious that the different definitions simply point out different methods or means to achieve the same end.

'*Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalaṁ*' of the Gita lays stress on Karma Kuśalatā (skill in action) as the means of attainment of the final end. '*Samatvaṁ yoga ucyate*' is not an emphasis on the equilibrium of mind alone, as many may be prone to think. It strikes a balance and harmony between body, mind and soul. For an all-round improvement and development, all parts must be co-ordinated and correlated and every part of man must be catered or cared for. All the three must be properly tuned up.

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[2] *Ibid.*, IX. 29; V. 29 etc.

A little reflection will convince us that all these four definitions of Yoga given in the Gita are not incompatible with one another nor even with the other definitions. The art of performing one's duties, i.e. the art of keeping oneself detached and disinterested from all desires for the fruits of actions is possible only when one has cultivated the ideal of *samatvaṁ*. The moment one perceives God in all things and all things in God (*Yo māṁ paśyati sarvatra sarvaṁ ca mayi paśyati*, vi-30), one is in touch with God. A mystic or yogin always looks on all as one (*paṇḍitāḥ samadarśinaḥ* — V-18). Plotinus says, 'there ... they see all, not in process of becoming but in Being. Each Being contains within itself the whole intelligible world and also beholds it complete in each particular Being. There All is everywhere. Each is there All and All is each.'[3] It is this perception or direct realization of the *samatva* that leads to the true union of the individual self with the higher Self (God) which is the goal of every Yoga. From this we may say that mysticism is the belief in unity in all things. Bertrand Russell rightly observes in his *Mysticism and Logic* (p. 18), 'one of the most convincing aspects of the mystic illumination is the apparent revelation of the oneness of all things, giving rise to pantheism in religion and to monism in philosophy.' Thus it is clear that 'Karma Kuśalatā' is impossible unless and until unperturbed ideal of equanimity, i.e. *samatvaṁ* has been reached. Just as a man minus body or mind or soul is unthinkable and impossible, it is likewise impossible and unthinkable that he can be liberated in the metaphysical sense without his body, mind and soul (i.e. all the three), being properly regulated, trained, nourished and developed. Neglect of the physical culture of man is as much injurious to his growth and emancipation as the neglect of mind-culture. Similarly, soul needs its own nourishment, instruction and escape. This is what we understand by integral or integrated Yoga (*Yoga-Yuktātmā*).

Having gone so far it becomes easy to see how important and essential the use of 'yoke' is for our improvement and advancement. 'Yoke' is restraint or curb upon our bodily and mental acts. Purity of word, deed and thought is a pre-requisite to spiritual upliftment.

The Gita lifts us up to a very high region of thought and action and tells us that worldly duties do not constitute a hindrance or an impediment to our spiritual rise and emancipation. On the contrary, if selflessly performed, they lead to our progress and deliverance. Every Karma (not *akarma* or *vikarma*), though it may seem to lead one to *pravṛtti marga*, has the liberating effect if it is *niṣkāma karma*. So the emphasis is upon *niṣkāma*. Let us not take shelter under this supreme sacred teaching by deceiving ourselves into the belief that personal or family gain is not excluded. Anything that smacks of *svārtha*, any act which amounts to self-aggrandisement, in fact any act not performed in a detached, disinterested manner with cleanest of motives for the good of others will not be *niṣkāma-karma*. The bed-rock of the teaching is *paropakāra* (doing good to others). Who can be found equal to the task ? only a yogin, i.e. a properly trained soul. But a word of caution is necessary here. We must not jump to the erroneous conclusion that to work for family or personal advancement is ruled out. Every duty (Dharma) towards every member of the family and oneself must be done and done equally well as for others. But let not the sordid motive of unlawful gain or greed be the guiding principle of our life. Means and motive must be pure and honest.

Arjuna's mind was confused as to duty. Confusion as to one's duty and responsibility is caused by ignorance or imperfect appreciation of the true nature of *dharma*. Each *karma* is not *dharma* but every *dharma* is *karma*. So Arjuna was instructed in *dharma*. *Dharma* has this world as its field of operation. So worldly duties have to be done well. Final victory of the body and mind, as well as the victory of virtue over vice and the final liberation of the soul from travail and bondages are thus assured. Arjuna did nothing for self-glorification, for self-advancement or selfish ends. He had already established his reputation as the foremost warrior; he had already defeated many warriors in previous engagements; he did not occupy the throne. He did only what he was told (Vide *Gita* Ch. XVIII-73). The substance of the Gita-Yoga is self-surrender to the Divine Will. A person is not ready for self-surrender unless and until he has become a yogin (i.e. until he has destroyed his 'ego'). Surrender implies freedom. It is not the subservience of a servant or slave to the will of his master or tyrant. Surrender of soul to the will of God must be in freedom and love. It must be a spontaneous act.

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[3] *Ennead*, 5 : 8.

The last question as to whether it can be practised by every normal man must be answered emphatically in the affirmative. The different definitions according to different systems should have made it quite clear by now, especially in the light of the discussion and elucidation of some of the points involved, that to suit a particular type of man a particular mode or method has been advocated. All of us are not constitutionally or temperamentally the same. Our inclinations and aptitudes are different. Our mode of approach is conditioned by all these natural factors. For these reasons and also for the overriding consideration that God can be reached by any and every one who has a yearning for Him, there are many means, i.e. different varieties of Yoga available to us. One can practise that which suits one. But none can do without Yoga. Yoga is indispensable to a *mumukṣu* (i.e. one who seeks *mokṣa*).

Now, in summing up, we should like to drive home the truth that Yoga is not so much a system of thought or a mode of physical exercise as a way of living. It is not the change of dress or dietary that raises man, though it automatically comes about in due course of time by constant practice of a particular kind of living. It is the inner change that matters. Yoga aims at a complete transformation of the psychic man.

The modern Indians, however, have luckily begun to realize that a new heaven and a new earth promised by the critics were worse (at least no better) than what were our own. The revelation as also the realization have, fortunately for us, set a new healthy tone and what was at one time a voiceless dissatisfaction, against costly colourful ritualism was sharply reflected later on in the teachings of the modern sages, savants and saints. Scriptural teachings in their pristine purity then began to be inculcated in all their seriousness. It is generally recognized now that 'Deśa sevā' properly construed and understood is a form of worship no less glorious than 'Deva-sevā' in an empty form. 'Daridra-sevā' is no less a beautiful form of worship of 'Annapūrṇā.' Founding of Universities, Colleges and imparting of scientific and other kinds of useful knowledge are the first charge upon our conscience and this is, in truth, 'Saraswatī-pūjā'.

Yoga preached by the Lord was practised by Arjuna in the battle-field of Kurukṣetra as well as in the battle-field of life. Kurukṣetra symbolises the battle-field of the 'Guṇas'. The hundred Kaurava brothers with their forces signify the Rājasika and the Tāmasika qualities in their different forms. Pāṇḍavas signify the 'Sattva Guṇa', full of love, purity, virtue, truth and charity. The world is an eternal Kurukṣetra, not a single moment passes without fight. The 'Guṇas' are the armies arrayed one against the other in this vast battle-field of Nature. Our body is the car driven by the Lord. The 'jīva' must surrender itself to the Supreme and live and act in Him. It is time we should also start practising in all sincerity, the same Yoga. We have many a battle still to fight. The conscience of mankind must be quickened to break up the plan of the Powers of Evil. It was Jesus Christ who said, 'Heaven and Earth shall pass away but my words shall not pass away.'[4] It was he again who said, 'For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.'[5] Aggressors are bound to perish if they persist in their evil career. Mankind is crying for safety, solace and salvation. Let the great and good men of the world seek His guidance so that the Buddha and the Ramakrishna Paramhamsa may be enthroned and righteousness may prevail.

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[4] *Gospel of St. Mathew*, 24. 35.

[5] *Ibid.*, 26. 52.

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

"As long as his hand was bandaged the Master did not go anywhere, but confined himself to the temple premises. At noon he would call Rāmalāldā and hear the Rāmāyaṇa recital. In the evening they sang *kirtanas* and the Master would join them, sometimes he would sing too. In the morning he used to sit on the verandah of his room. .. One day Sharat babu and Shashi babu came. The Master used to love Shashi dearly. He would ask him to pass some nights there with him but Shashi would not. Once the Master said, 'Sharat belonged in his previous incarnation, to Jesus's group of disciples.' ... One day a new boy devotee came from Calcutta. (He was Gangādhara Maharaj, Swami Akhandananda). He was rigidly orthodox and would cook his food himself and eat. He would not take even the consecrated food of the Kali temple. Once the Master invited him to take his food in the temple. At first he would not agree. Later, however, he yielded but did not touch fish. Observing this, the Master said, 'My boy, what harm is there in taking betel roll or fish? One can keep his mind fixed on God even after taking all these. ... One day Haribabu (Swami Turiyananda) came to Dakshineswar and the Master invited him to come to him now and then, especially when others would not be there. Haribabu used to come to Dakshineswar early morning and would go away before others would come. Sometimes, however, he would come at noon and would depart before dusk when others were expected to come."

'One day during this time, Surendrababu came to Dakshineswar with a mat and pillow under his armpit and said he would stay there. For four or five days he did stay there. Soon after, he had to leave for fear of his wife. His wife would not allow him to stay out at night. The Master understood his situation and said, "Suresh dear, your wife is upset at home. You take away your mat and pillow and go home. You need not pass days and nights here. These people are here to look after me. It is sufficient if you would come here, spend some hours and go home, as you used to do before. That will be quite enough for your enlightenment."'

'Loren's father died the same year the Master broke his hand. Naturally, busy with making arrangement for the household Loren could not come to Dakshineswar as he used to do. So the Master would send us oftener to his house. And Loren babu used to be very happy whenever we would go to him. There were difficulties on all sides; even the relatives, who had been the recipient of all kinds of help from Loren's father, turned against him; but brother Loren did not yield to anything. Looking at his face, nobody could ever guess that he was passing through difficult times. Whenever he used to meet me he would ask for detailed information of Dakshineswar. He would sometimes ask me to prepare well a *cheelum* for smoking. Then as he was smoking, he would talk inspiringly to me, as if he was lecturing.'

A Devotee : 'Was he lecturing? On what topics, Maharaj? Do speak a little to us about them. It would indeed be a treat to us.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Treat indeed. But only to hear and not to do a hundredth part of the penance that he performed. What do you say? What Loren babu used to tell us then, nobody — none of us — ever thought about them. Do you know what he used to say? "As long as I do not see God I would not believe that there is such a thing as God. Neither would I have faith in the Master's words nor in the magic that he played on me in showing God saying, 'Look there is the Lord.' I am not to be duped thus." Another day he said, "If your God is so kind as you depict Him to be, why is then so much pain and misery in the world? Your God is extremely cruel; His only business is to put man to trouble. I would have nothing to do with such a God." Some other day he would talk on some other topic. He would say, "Look here, Leto, what the Master says, strange to say, all tally with the scriptures. He has not read any scriptures, how do they tally? This is something which I fail to understand. He is illiterate, how does he know all that. I tell you, Plato* don't leave his company. If you live with him you will see how great you will be." Do I remember all those inspiring talks? They are too numerous. Whatever I heard from him I used to repeat to the Master. He said once, "When the dark night of doubts passes away the morning twilight of devotion makes its appearance."'

'One day (it was before the Master broke his hand) a tough and heavy Punjabi Mussalman wrestler came to fight with Hanuman Singh, the wrestler of the Kali temple. The new wrestler looked a giant, did hard physical exercise for fifteen days, and consumed meat, ghee, milk in large quantities. His strength and appearance assured his victory — everyone was convinced of that. Hanuman Singh came to the Master one day to receive his blessings. The Master told him, to reduce his diet and physical exercise and to take refuge with Mahavirji (Rama's faithful servant and strength deified) and go on repeating his name. "If Mahavirji is pleased" said the Master, "enemies are defeated in a trice." Hanuman Singh had unbounded faith in the Master and he acted up to his advice and won the bout easily. Just see the power of the Divine Name. The Master repeatedly told us that there was no power greater than that of the Lord's name.'

'One day the Master saw Rakhal Babu and myself wrestling in the temple premises. Rakhal babu was a practised wrestler and was quite strong. He used to wrestle in Ambubabu's gymnasium. In our bouts in the temple neither Rakhal babu nor I could defeat the other. Seeing this the Master said laughingly, "Ah! You are wrestling in the manner of the mythic fight between the Elephant and the Tortoise — both are equal, none can defeat the other."'

At this a devotee questioned, 'Maharaj, did you wrestle all along at Dakshineswar?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'No. He asked me not to wrestle; so I stopped.'

Devotee : 'Why did he prohibit you from wrestling, Maharaj?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'I was getting lean and thin. Observing this he said, "You are getting reduced, stop wrestling. Hard meditation and wrestling cannot go together. If both of them are done to excess health will break down." After that I never wrestled. Occasionally just a little trial of strength to keep fit.'

'During the Master's last illness, Kaviraj Mahendra Nath Pal visited him. While leaving, the latter gave five rupees to Ramalalda. The Master did not know of it. At night I observed he was tossing about in the bed. I went on fanning him for a considerable time, yet his uneasiness did not abate. At last he asked me, "Go and call the rascal Ramanelo (colloquial in both anger and affection); he must have done something wrong. Or else how is it that I have no wink of sleep ?" It was about 1 or 2 in the morning. When I brought Ramalalda to the room, the Master said, "Rascal, go at once and return the money to the person from whom you have taken it." Ramalalda had to go to the Kaviraj's house that very night, wake him up from sleep and return the money. Wonderful ! Isn't it ?'

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*Narendranath used to call Latu Maharaj as Plato in fun referring to his illiteracy but the strong common sense.

'One day, during the Master's illness, Bhavanath, Rakhal, Loren, and other brothers started cooking in big vesels, rice, dal and other dishes near the Panchavati. When cooking was over and the brothers were sitting in a line to partake of the cooked food offered to the Lord a Baul came and was going to sit with us. The Master did not allow him to do so. Loren babu said, "Please allow him to sit, we have cooked enough, we shall not run short." The Master would not yield but said, "No, no, it is impossible. When you have finished your lunch and if there be something left then only will he get anything. He can never be allowed to sit with you." When we finished our food he told us, "What merit has he earned that he will sit along with you ? During one's period of spiritual practice one must exercise discrimination about taking food with others."'

'Once Ramababu was bringing a basket of *jilapi* (a kind of sweet) for the Master, but on the way he gave a piece to a beggar-boy. That day the Master could not take Ramababu's *jilapi*. He said, "Mind you, Ram, whatever you will bring for 'here' (i.e. me) you must not give any part of it before it is offered here. To offer a portion of a thing to one is as good as offering the whole of it to him ; and a thing once offered to one cannot be offered again to another. And you know it well, that I cannot take anything without offering it to Mother."'

'During his illness Tārakbābu (later Swami Shivananda) came one day to Dakshineswar. He brought from Vrindavan some gram, the holy dust, the holy earth (for marking the sacred sign on the forehead), offered garland and other things. Seeing the Master's hand bandaged and in splints Tārakbābu asked, what the matter was. In reply the Master said with a smile, "While I was enjoying the beauty of 'uncle' moon I got entangled in the wires and fell down and was hurt. This is its hang-over." Tārakbābu again asked whether the bone was dislocated or broken. At this the Master said in a complaining tone, "What do I know, my boy ? But this much I feel that these people have bandaged me — in all parts of my body, as it were and would not allow me to call on Mother freely. They will not allow me to free myself from the bondages. Do tell me if one is bound like that can one call on Mother ? Sometimes I feel 'Let me throw off all these and be a free man again.' But again it strikes me — no, this also is a fun and play ; in it also there is joy." Tārakbābu added, "But if you will you can be free this very moment." The Master exclaimed, "Eh ! Indeed !" And then he kept quiet for sometime, and added, "No, a disease is to be patiently borne away. Those who are coming here with selfish desires will all run away, thinking, 'He cannot cure himself what will he do to us ?' Thus they will not bother me any more." Next moment, he said, as if to himself, "Mother, what a nice trick you are playing." Then he started singing ; and singing he passed into *samādhi*.'

'One day a man too much engrossed in worldly matters came to the Master and started talking on worldly things. The Master said, "Don't, don't talk of such things here. (Pointing to the Manager's room). Go there." The fellow went there. Then the Master told me to sprinkle Ganges water on the place where he had sat. "The fellow," he said, "is a bond slave to 'lust and lucre.' He has polluted the earth on the spot seven cubits deep. Sprinkle Ganges water profusely."'

'One day Girishbabu came to Dakshineswar dead drunk. Noticing this the Master asked me to see if he had left behind anything in the carriage and to bring whatever I would find there. I went and saw there was a bottle of whisky and a tumbler. I took them and returned to the Master's room. Looking at the bottle of whisky, all present laughed aloud. At that the Master said, "Keep them aside. They will be of use, when he will come to his senses." Just see how liberal he could be for the sake of the devotees!'

'Another day Girishbabu brought Dāna (demon) Kali (Kalipada Ghosh) to Dakshineswar. The Dāna was a beastly drunkard, would not give a farthing for the maintenance of the household, spend away everything on alcohol. But he had a divinely chaste wife. Many many days back she once had come to the Master — so I have heard — and asked for some medicine or magic-spell to cure her husband of the malady. But the Master, without doing anything himself, sent her to Holy Mother. Holy Mother understood the joke and sent her back to the Master. Thus she went back and forth thrice. At last Holy Mother took pity on her and gave her something — She wrote the Master's name on an offered belleaf and gave it to Dāna's wife and asked her to take the Lord's name as heartily and often as possible. Accordingly the wife went on devotedly taking God's name for twelve years. It is for this that the moment the Master saw Dāna for the first time he exclaimed, "Here at long last comes the rogue after roasting the wife for twelve long years!" Dāna Kali gave a start but said nothing. Then the Master said in a soft tone, "What do you want, gentleman? Tell me." Dāna was such an irrevocable rogue as to say, "Can you give me, Sir, a little wine." Master: "Yes, I can. But the wine of this place is very strong. Will you be able to stand it?" Dāna thought it might be genuine Scotch whisky. So he prayed for a little to wet his parched throat. The Master said, "Not so, dear. It is not Scotch whisky, it is the unalloyed causal spirit. This thing cannot be given to one and all. All cannot stand it. If you take it but once you will not like foreign liquor any more. Are you ready to give up that spirit and take the one supplied here?" Dāna thought a little, Lord alone knows what; and then said in all earnestness, "Do give me that liquor which will keep me intoxicated throughout life, do give." Immediately the Master touched him. Ah! what crying! What profuse shedding of tears! All of us tried to stop him but failed. What an upsurge of emotion! One day while going by a boat on the Ganges the Master wrote on his tongue the sacred *mantra* of his chosen deity. Later on he became a great devotee of the Master and spent lots of money in the Master's service. Just see if one's wife is so chaste as that she does not shrink from undergoing the hardest penance for her husband. Because of his wife Dānakali got salvation.'

(*To be continued*)

THE GREAT EQUATION

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

S. K. GUPTA

Aaruni: Look at that beehive, my son. The swarm of assiduous bees cull juice from different flowers and make honey. The heterogeneous collection is transformed into a homogeneous whole. Can the individual ingredients discriminate themselves? Can the juice of the mango blossom, for instance, know that it is from a mango tree and not from a jackfruit tree? The juices, whatever may be their individual qualities sweet or sour, brackish or bitter, are unified in honey. Contrarily in an assembly of human beings, each individual knows his identity, that he is the son of so and so and the grandson of so and so. Why is this difference? In the case of honey, the many have merged into one and all distinctions have been eliminated, while in the case of the crowd, the individuals retain their disparateness. In the state of unitive existence, in deep sleep, death or dissolution, all distinctions are wiped out.

Like honey, Reality, the delectable Whole is not the sum of, an aggregation of, individuals but the substance of All, an integration of the many into One, a fusion in the Delight of Being. Therefore there is no individual awareness of this great fact of being, as you say.

Śwetaketu : Persons wake up after a dreamless sleep, death is followed by rebirth, while the entire universe reappears after dissolution. Why is this severance from that beatific state — why this fall from grace?

Aaruni : As I have already said this phenomenal diversity, this ramified existence is the objectification of the Idea and Will of Reality. The manifestation of the One in many follows a set pattern and that is the reason why the phenomenal universe appears as a cosmos and not as a chaos. It is governed by the inexorable dynamics of Karma. Every thought and every deed of a person leave their imprint on his psychic system. These impressions are the Vāsanas, the dispositions, which constitute the persona of a person. Vāsana is odour, it may be fragrant or foul according to the quality of the thought or the deed. The combination of these Vāsanas determine the tone or the quality of the personality. They are the 'built in properties' of the organism. They lie latent in the mind stuff. When on rebirth or on a fresh manifestation of the universe after dissolution, the many sparks off from the effulgent flame of Reality, the individual psyches with the reflection of 'Sat' on them, appear as egos and seek out suitable bodies, according to their tone or quality. They have a wide range of choice amongst the numerous species of living beings like the tiger, the lion, the wolf, the boar, the insect, the locust, the gnat or the mosquito. Waking up from slumber, the ego, disunited from Reality, functions through its own particular body, there is no confusion about it—one ego does not possess another's body. It is like picking your own cloak from the peg as you get up from bed. The reason is that the Vāsana complex — the particular individual tone — follows the ego through eternity. That is why it has been said 'Birth is determined by the inherent mental complex'. So long as the Vāsana complex remains, there is no getting out of the phenomenal world, the disunion from Reality is bound to occur. While this is the normal cycle of events, there are persons, who in their wisdom, are able to transcend this bondage of Vāsana and are not deflected from unitive existence in Reality, from the Joy of Being. This Principle of Reality pervades everything, informs everything, is the essence of everything. It is intangible, ineffable and subtle. And *Thou Art That*, O Śwetaketu.

Śwetaketu : Sir, like,

> 'Trailing clouds of glory do we come,
> From Heaven which is our Home';

and yet curiously enough we have no recollection of our nativity. A traveller knows that he is on sojourn and he has a home. Yet humanity is completely oblivious of its celestial Home. How is that explained? Kindly elucidate further, sir.

Aaruni : Let us learn it from the great book of nature. From the snow capped Himalayas rush out mighty rivers. The Sindhu, the Satadru, the Bipasa flow west, while the Ganga, the Jamuna, the Brahmaputra flow east. All, however, pour their waters into the ocean. Heated by solar rays, the waters rise as vapour and form into clouds and rain down on the Himalayas, to flow back to the ocean through the same courses. Could you tell the waters of the Ganga away from the waters of the Sindhu, when they lie merged in the ocean, or when they form into clouds and shower down on the mountains? Is it not obvious that the waters of these numerous rivers all come from that one great reservoir — the ocean? Discrimination is only possible in conditioned existence. In unitive existence all sense of particulars disappears. Therefore, son, on re-entry into this world of appearances, after dissolution, the numerous beings assume the forms, which they had prior to annihilation. The entire chain of events rattles off as in previous creations. But the individuals are not conscious of the fact of their existence in 'Sat' or their emergence from It. They have no awareness of their centripetal and centrifugal motions. Billows and breakers, waves and surf rise from the sea to fall back into it. So do the countless beings emerge from and fuse into the Great Being every moment. The only difference is that while the former perish in the waters of the sea, the latter do not, whether it be in the depth of slumber, in the darkness of death or in the abyss of annihilation.

Śwetaketu : I should like to know more father. What is it that continues after death or dissolution ?

Aaruni : Look at the yonder mighty tree with spreading branches. Hew it at the root, hew it in the middle or hew it on the top, it just secretes but continues to draw sap from the earth, feeling the joy of life in its fullness. The Essence permeates its body which pulsates with life. But if disease or a mortal wound affects a branch, it withers and falls off, if the disease spreads or the wound is extensive, the whole tree withers and perishes — the Essence, the Atman leaves the body. Sustenance and growth of the organism indicate the existence of essence with life in a body. The self development of an organism is the result of conscious efforts of the essential principle in it — its ego. When therefore the ego restricts its efforts, certain parts of the organism become lifeless and perish and when it withdraws, the entire organism dies. Incidentally please note that plants though static are sentient. Sustenance, growth and disease are signs not only of life but also of consciousness. The Kanādian and the Buddhistic view that plants are unconscious, is erroneous.

The human organism with its inner core of speech, life, mind and senses is informed by the ego. It becomes defunct or is destroyed like the tree, with the withdrawal of the ego. It is the mortal coil that becomes defunct or dead and not the ego, the Conscious Spirit informing it.

Śwetaketu : What evidence is there of the continuance of personality in deep sleep or in death ?.

Aaruni : Waking up from deep sleep a person picks up the thread of his previous waking experience. Works left unfinished are taken up and completed. The very fact that there is no lapse of memory would indicate the continuance of personality.

Again a new born infant clutches its mother's breast and sucks, cries out in fear, without any previous experience of these acts in its present life. This behaviour can only be explained by a recollection of past experiences. And such experiences must necessarily have occurred in a previous life.

The entire ritualism of the Vedas would lack import in the absence of existence after death. The Vedas are surely not just meaningless gibberish.

So you see in reality, in essence, you are That Subtle Conscious Principle. Equate yourself with That for *Thou Art That.*

Śwetaketu : How can this very gross particularized world of percepts and concepts arise from the extremely Subtle Universal Principle of Reality. How does the Absolute throw up the relative ? I am keen to know more about it father.

Aaruni : Bring that little banyan fruit.

Śwetaketu : Here it is sir.

Aaruni : Break it. What do you see in it ?

Śwetaketu : Little seeds sir.

Aaruni : Cut a seed open and tell me what you see inside it.

Śwetaketu : Nothing is perceptible inside the seed, father.

Aaruni : There you are. You cannot see the subtle part of the seed. Yet from this subtle had sprouted and grown this enormous banyan tree, with its huge trunk, overhanging branches, thick foliage and innumerable flowers and fruits. You perceive the gross effect but not the subtle Cause. Therefore, my dear, have an enlightened faith. Engrossed in the objective world, the mind fails to grasp these subtle truths without being appropriately conditioned by humility and faith in the Vedas, which contain lessons on the Imperceptible, the Intangible. And what they teach is founded fully on reason. Without this psychic quality, you will never get an answer to your question. Doubt has its use in acquisition of knowledge but too much of it shakes the foundations thereof. Truth eludes an intellectual riot. It has been said 'Scepticism does not lead to Truth'. In fact, out and out scepticism reveals an intellectual insincerity.

Let me repeat, the essence of this cosmic flux is That imperceptible Principle, That is Truth, That is Atman, and *'Thou Art That'*.

Śwetaketu : Excuse me father. If 'Sat' is the source, support and essence of this changing world of experience, why can't it be perceived? Kindly elucidate further sir.

Aaruni : Put a lump of salt in this pot of water and come and see me next morning.

[Śwetaketu does as he is told and comes for his lessons the next morning]

Aaruni : Pick out the salt that you dropped in the water last night.

[The salt having dissolved in the water, Śwetaketu fails to recover it.]

Śwetaketu : It cannot be found father.

Aaruni : I see. You can neither see it nor touch it, but surely it must be in the water for you yourself dropped it. Now sip a little of this water from the top, from the middle and from the bottom.

[Śwetaketu does so]
How does it taste?

Śwetaketu : Saline sir. Apparently the salt has completely dissolved in the water and exists in all parts of it.

Aaruni : So the salt, you dropped in the water last night, exists though you do not see it or feel it any more. You have located it through another instrument of perception viz. your sense of taste, because being subtilised it eludes your sight and touch. Similarly in a material body, which is a mutation of the compound of energy, water and earth, the 'Sat', which is the cause of the three subtle material principles, exists, tenuous and ubiquitous, just as the minute parts of the banyan seed lie imperceptibly in the tree. Though the senses may not apprehend It, there are other means of realizing Its presence. You must have been convinced from the illustration of the salt dissolved in water that mere lack of apprehension through senses is no evidence of non-existence of an entity. You feel It though you may not see It. This Intangible and Imperceptible Principle is Reality, is Essence and *'Thou Art That'* Śwetaketu.

Śwetaketu : Teach me that means, father, otherwise my whole life would be infructuous. The discovery of Self is doubtless the highest end of humanity.

(To be continued)

THE GREATNESS OF RAMAYANA

K. E. PARTHASARATHI

Valmiki is the greatest and oldest of Sanskrit poets. His *Ramayana* is universally accepted as the first poem in Sanskrit and is a unique work. It is not only an epic but also much more. In the words of Brahma, Ramayana will continue to exist so long as mountains and rivers remain on the surface of the earth.[1]

No product of Sanskrit Literature has enjoyed greater popularity in India than Valmiki's Ramayana. It has provided materials to other poets such as Aśvaghosha, Kalidasa, Bhavabhuti, Murari, Kamban and Tulasidas. Aśvaghosha composed *Buddha Charita* on the model of the Ramayana. The debt of Kalidasa to Valmiki was ample and has been profusely acknowledged by him. He refers most respectfully to Valmiki in his *Raghuvamsa* as the *Poorvacharya* (ancient saint-poet) as Kavi (poet) and as Muni (saint). Bhavabhuti in his opening *mangala sloka* of *Uttararama Charita*, 'This verse is composed in praise of the ancient teachers,'[2] refers only to Valmiki, the plural being honorific. Traces of influence of Valmiki on Veda Vyasa are very striking in the *Mahabharata* especially in *Bhagavad Gita*. Every one of the eighteen Puranas as also *Adhyatma Ramayana*, *Ananda Ramayana*, *Adbhuta Ramayana*, *Vasishta Ramayana* etc. deal with the incidents in the life of Sri Rama with modifications incorporating fresh details not contained in Valmiki's work. But the conclusion, that the story of Rama has not been described better by anyone else than Valmiki, cannot escape attention.

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[1] यावत् स्थास्यन्ति गिरय: सरितश्च महीतले ।
तावत् रामायणकथा लोकेषु प्रचरिष्यति ॥

Balakanda Sarga 2. *slokas* 36 & 37.

The following indicates the great esteem with which Valmiki and Ramayana are held: 'To Valmiki, the Kokila (cuckoo) seated on the tree of poetry and singing the sweet words "Rama!" "Rama!!" I do my obeisance.'[3] All morning salutations (*suprabhātam*) to Godheads invariably begin with the memorable adoration of Viśvāmitra. 'O, Rama, son of Kausalya, the night is passing into day in the east. Arise, O lion among men. Do the divine duties of the morning.'[4] A *suprabhātam* helps a devotee to associate himself with God at the beginning of the day and to spend the day usefully and spiritually. A day without *suprabhātam* is a day of starvation in the words of Periyalwar *alias* Vishnu Chitta.

Apart from being a glorious epic, Ramayana is a sacred work treating about the life of Sri Rama, an Avatar of Vishnu. The following *sloka* from *Harivaṁśa* quoted in the *Vishnu Sahasranama Bhāshya* of Acharya Sankara may be mentioned in this connection. 'In the Vedas, in the Ramayana, in the Puranas, and in the Mahabharata — in all these at the beginning, in the middle and in the end, everywhere the Lord only is adored.'[5] It is a cardinal article of faith with the Hindus that the *pārāyaṇa* of Ramayana leads to both material prosperity and liberation. It is recorded in Kalhana's *Rajatarangiṇi* that king Damodara of Kashmir, who was cursed by certain sages for refusing to give them food when asked, was advised to expiate this sin by hearing the recitation of the entire Ramayana in a single day.

It is a panacea for all *sāmsaric* (worldly) evils and worries and leads everyone to the feet of Rama. It is in the words of *Vishnu Sahasranama* a remedy as also the doctor. It is said that he who reads or hears Ramayana will not only be benefited in this world but in the other worlds as well.

It is said that 'Ramayana is a mighty repository of the priceless wisdom enshrined in the Vedas.' The Agastya samhita says: 'The Supreme One whom Vedas try to reach, came down on earth as Sri Rama, the son of Dasaratha; so, the Vedas came down to where he was, as Ramayana, the child of Valmiki's heart.'

Valmiki himself says that his poem is an amplification of the Veda. The Vedas are the paraphrase of the Gayatri Mantra. Each letter of the Gayatri begins a thousand of the slokas. It is considered that the Bālakāṇḍa signifies *savita* in the Gayatri, Ayodhya and Kishkinda *kāṇḍas* the word *vareṇyaṁ*, Aranyakāṇḍa *bharga*, Sundarakāṇḍa *devasya*, Yuddhakāṇḍa and Uttarakāṇḍa *pracodayāt*. The meaning of Ramayana is the same as that of the Gayatri. The utterance or hearing of a single sloka of Ramayana is enough to confer the corresponding benefits of the Gayatri.

The epic is based on the hymns in the Rig Veda. It is not merely a record of incidents that occurred during a certain period. It is also a symbolic account of cosmic events that repeat themselves with or without modifications. Rama, Sita, Ravana are real characters. There is not a single particular of life — private or public — which has not been properly and strikingly illustrated in the words and deeds of the characters in the poem. It is therefore a work of outstanding merit of an eternal nature. It is an *itihāsa*.

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[2] इदं गुरुभ्यः पूर्वेभ्यो नमोवाकं प्रशास्महे ।

[3] कूजन्तं राम रामेति मधुरं मधुराक्षरम् ।
आरुह्य कविताशाखां वन्दे वाल्मीकि कोकिलम् ॥

[4] कौसल्या सुप्रजा राम पूर्वा सन्ध्या प्रवर्तते ।
उत्तिष्ट नरशार्दूल कर्तव्यं दैवमाह्निकम् ॥

[5] वेदे रामायणे चैव पुराणे भारते तथा ।
आदावन्ते च मध्ये च हरिः सर्वत्र गीयते ॥

An *itihāsa* is defined as, 'One that has as its subject past episodes in life and depicts the ways to attain righteousness (*dharma*) wealth (*artha*), enjoyments (*kāma*) and liberation (*mokṣa*).'[6] In the first six *kāṇḍas* (books), Valmiki deals with the life and adventures of Rama. They inculcate virtue, wealth and love and the last *kāṇḍa* deals with the science of Brahman. The poem deals not only with *pravṛtti dharma* but also with *nivṛtti dharma*.

In every word, deed and action of Rama *dharma* is unfolded. All the seven *kāṇḍas* deal with *dharmic* aspects. The seventh *kāṇḍa* is important as it contains very valuable information and enhances the glory and importance of the poem.

The pursuit of *artha* and *kāma* is regarded as natural and normal, provided they do not clash with *dharma*. Sri Krishna also emphasises in the Gita: 'I am the desire in the creatures, O best among the Bharatas, which does not go against righteousness.'[7] The epic points out that *dharma*, if scrupulously followed will lead to the attainment of the other *purushārthas*.

In Ramayana love and the other emotions (nine *rasas*) which are essential requisites of an epic find apt and ample expression. Rama lives happily with Sita for many years. The course of love runs smooth. Ravana carries her off to Lanka. We have then a vivid description of the miseries and sorrows of the separated pair. Dasaratha pines away in sorrow on account of separation from Rama and eventually dies. Pathos characterises the entire scene. Lakshmana's deeds of valour illustrate the heroic in man. The incident of Māricha and his kin is a picture of the fearful. Kabanda and Virada appropriate to themselves the repulsive. Wonderful and beyond belief are the deeds of battle and might of Ravana, Indrajit and Kumbhakarna. Śabari, the woman saint embodies the serene in her noble life. But love dominates the epic; the other emotions are only auxiliary.

The hero ennobles the epic. Fame and valour are his. The chief events centre round him. All the heroic qualities shine in him. A hero must also exemplify the following qualities: (1) noble birth, (2) natural beauty which can captivate the hearts of all, (3) overwhelming munificence and generosity, (4) illuminating grandeur of presence, (5) a right adaptation of means to ends, and a marvellous and quick perception of all actions, (6) a heart ever wedded to Dharma, (7) Divine Origin, (8) a perfect knowledge and mastery of all the knowledge of the time, (9) courage in the face of all trials and tribulations and (10) supreme simplicity and unassumingness.

Needless to mention that Sri Rama possessed abundantly all these qualities. All excellences find their perfect expression in him. The greatness of Rama has been summed up by Valmiki in the following lines: 'He, who has not seen Rama, he upon whom the benign glances of Rama have not fallen, is looked down upon in all the worlds, nay his own self scorns him.'[8]

The Valmiki Ramayana must have been composed long after the Vedas. The poem gives a minute and grand description of the Aryan civilization, which was predominantly moral. It was an age of equipoise, order and tranquillity. An urge to establish morality actuated Rama in all his words and deeds.

The *Uttarakāṇḍa* shows that Valmiki was Rama's contemporary. Valmiki was the bard of Rama era as Vyasa was of Krishna era. In this respect, Valmiki and Vyasa were luckier than other poets. Boswell's *Life of Johnson* is the most outstanding biography in

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[6] धर्मार्थकाममोक्षानामुपदेशसमन्वित: ।
पूर्ववृत्तकथायुक्तमितिहासं प्रचक्षते ॥

[7] धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्मि भरतर्षभ ।

[8] यश्चरामं न पश्येत्तु यं च रामो न पश्यति ।
निन्दित: सर्वलोकेषु स्वात्माप्येनं विगर्हते ॥
Ayodhyakanda 17. 14-15.

English literature, as Boswell being a contemporary of Johnson could give untarnished minute and charming details of his life. Valmiki has given many charming and minute particulars, especially in regard to Sita's life in Sundarakāṇḍa. Such descriptions have enhanced the glory and charm of the poem and made it a living work of art.

Ramayana is the life breath of Vaishnavite Alwars, Acharyas and commentators. Ramanuja spent a year on the Tirupati Hills with Tirumalai Nambi to get clarification on moot and intricate points in the poem by way of discussions. It is not only a sacred literature to the Vaishnavite seers and Acharyas but every letter in it is an authority to them. It is their main code of conduct and morals for observance in their day-to-day life. Many of the verses in the *prabandas* and *granthas* have been profusely interpreted in the light of the slokas in the poem. *Edu* — an outstanding commentary on Nammalvar's Tiruvoimozhi — is a classical example in this behalf. It also contains appropriate and charming interpretations of many of the slokas in the poem.

Ramayana mirrors the *kalyana guṇas* (auspicious qualities) of Rama. Valmiki named the poem as 'Ramayanam', 'Sitāyāḥ charitam' or 'Paulastya Vadham'. Other names which he gave are 'Raghuvara Charita' and 'Raghuvamsa Charita'. The colophon at the end of each sarga is *ityārshesrimad rāmāyaṇe*', so the name 'Ramayana' has come to stay. By the use of the words '*sitayāḥ caritam mahat*' (Balakanda — iv sarga) it is considered that the poet wanted to give greater prominence to Sita's story than to that of Rama's for the following reasons: Though Sita was separated thrice from her Lord, her heart was ever in him and never forgot him even for a fraction of a moment. She was the embodiment of compassion. She granted *abhaya* (fearlessness) unasked, to the Rakshasis in spite of their cruel treatment of her.

Ramayana is the *ādi kāvya* in the sense that it is a product of genuine poetry which spontaneously sprang out of the pathos-filled fountain of Valmiki's heart. In the lines, 'As you have killed, one of a pair of birds which was lovingly in sport you will not, O hunter, prosper for many years,' he discovered that his pity had taken the shape of a sloka but he was deeply distressed at his own impetuosity in cursing the hunter thiswise. However, Brahma appeared to him and asked him not to be sad. 'Things have proceeded in accordance with the laws I have ordained,' said He. 'Compose in the same style the story of Rama in the manner Narada told you. What is not known to you will become known of itself as you will proceed with your work. No word of your poem will be other than the truth.' Valmiki and his disciples repeated the sloka again and again and fixed its pattern firmly in their minds. Valmiki then composed Ramayana in the same metre and taught it to his disciples. The *anushṭup* metre used by the poet has a threefold merit. It has deep poetic content (*rasa*), it has *dhvani* (inner meaning) and it has sweet rhythm and melody. The sorrow thus blossomed into an enchanting poetry in the case of Valmiki as the sorrows of life blossomed into wisdom in the case of the Buddha.

Seeing Lava and Kuśa, endowed with exceptional talents and well versed in the Vedas, the Rishi taught them the whole of Ramayana with the object of enlightening them on the meaning of the Vedas. The sloka beginning with *tāmadbhutām* in sarga 93 in Uttarakāṇḍa shows the wondering appreciation and enjoyment of the beauties of the *kāvya* by Lava and Kuśa. The Rishis in and around the hermitage of Valmiki admired both the poem and its singing by Lava and Kuśa. When the poem was recited for the first time in Rama's court, Rama called it a *Mahākāvya* and said that the poem would enhance his glory and fame. He characterised the writer of the *kāvya* as *Purvācharya*.

It may also be considered that Ramayana is Rama Brahma Vidya. It is Rama Brahma Jijñāsa Śāstra. Tapas is the *sādhana* of *Brahma jijñāsa*. The poet compiled the Ramayana sitting as a *tapasvi* on *darbha* grass and obtained a clear vision of all the incidents mentioned in the *kāvya*. The name 'Valmiki' is itself indicative of his unparalleled *tapas*. The word *tapasvi* used as an adjective in the sloka suggests the dispassionate condition of the Rishi and confirms the view that Ramayana is intended to be Rama Brahma Vidya. Rama Rasa is Brahma Rasa. 'Drink the Rama Rasa' sings the great Sadaśiva Brahman.

It is therefore no wonder that no other poem in the world today holds the place Ramayana does in Indian life. It is stated in the last *sarga* of the Yuddhakāṇḍa that when Rama was reigning in Ayodhya, people loved to repeat his name countlessly and the whole of the kingdom was Ramamaya or *ānandamaya*. Generations have felt the same joy and *ānanda* in repeating the name and still the praise of Rama resounds in the world and is giving joy.

THE SERPENT IN INDIAN LORE

M. V. SRIDATTA SARMA

Between the great eras of the fishes and the mammals, a kind of reptilean kingdom is said to have prevailed over the earth. Palaeontologists describe and style this as a middle kingdom, when they were the dominant creatures on the earth. The reptiles reigned supreme on land, in air and the sea for no shorter time than a hundred and fifty million years and in the end they had to suffer a catastrophe.

The Vedic and Puranic texts also refer to the dominance of these creatures. A passage from the Yajurveda makes mention of the serpents which infested the earth, the air, the seas (waters) and hollows. Accordingly, a prayer is offered to them. (*Namo astu sarpebhyo ye ke ca pṛthivī manu ye antarikṣe ye divi tebhyaḥ sarpebhyo namaḥ. Ye vā vateṣu śerate yeṣāmapsu sadah kṛtam*). .

According to a Puranic account, the serpent race which inhabited the infernal regions (*Pātāla*) was known as the Naga race. It is said that by Dākṣāyini, Kasyapa begot seven serpents beginning with Vāsuki. The increase in their progeny eventually resulted in the flooding of serpents to the detriment of mankind. The Varāha Purana says that these creatures were so powerful in those days that they attacked other creatures without cause. They made bold to unfold their venomous fangs and inject the venom on any passer by. Mankind was thus greatly oppressed by these dreadful beings and in a moment the victim had to meet with a tragic end. They were crooked and so base in their acts that they sprang upon the unfortunate victim with a flow of abundant venom. (*Kutilā hīna karmāṇaḥ tīkṣṇa syotthā viṣolbanāḥ. Dṛṣtvā sandaṁśya manujān bhasmīkuryuḥ kṣaṇāddhruvaḥ*). So the aggrieved parties approached the Grandsire for redress.

The Lord was thus addressed: 'Oh Lord, be pleased to rescue us from the attacks of these serpents with their terrible fangs. At the mere sight of these, either men or beings (herds of animals) will be reduced to death. The entire world which was created by you will certainly dissolve (perish) as a sequel to their attacks. Knowing these evil attacks on their part, be pleased to relieve us from this menace. (*Trāhinaḥ tīkṣṇa daṁstrebhyo bhujangebhyo mahābala..... Tvayā sṛṣṭiḥ kṛtā deva līyate sā bhujangamaiḥ.*" Varaha Purana: XXIV-13-14). The Grandsire was very much grieved by their representations and He in turn assured them that he would certainly afford succour against the onslaughts.

The leaders of the serpent race were summoned to appear before the Grandsire. Said the Lord thus: 'In view of your being a great source of danger to humanity as also the other beings of creation, I direct that in the next *svāyambhuva manvantara*, you will perish by the curse of your own mother.' To the reptiles this was a great shock and concern too, when Brahma inflicted this curse as a scourge against all their wrong-doings, so much so that they simply prostrated themselves before Him and said thus: 'Lord, it is only by your commands that we took birth in this accursed race. You are the cause for this and we have acquired all the traits that become the race to which we now belong, such characteristics as intense venom, (*viṣolbana*), cruelty or wickedness (*krūratva*) and keen sight for a ready attack (*dṛkṣāstratva*). We request that these evil propensities be diminished.' The Lord replied: 'Because I created your race with these qualities, is it right on your part to eat away or destroy mankind?' Replied the reptiles thus: 'Oh Lord, if you assign different zones for our habitat and promulgate the necessary ordinances (*Niyama*), we shall confine ourselves to those zones only.' To this the Grandsire said, 'Now I shall arrange a truce between you and mankind. Let these spheres like Patala, Vitala and Sutala serve as your strongholds, where you should dwell, live and enjoy till my seventh night draws to a close. In the Vaivasvata Manvantara, you shall be born as the children of Kaśyapa, thus becoming agnates to Garuda and the members of the winged race. Your children will be eaten away by Garuda. I have to warn you that such of you as are impolite and cruel will have to meet this doom. You may attack only such persons as promote evil and have neared the end of their lives. However, I have to tell you this much: You should also behave politely towards those who cure snake bites with charms, incantations and medicines (toxicologists), as otherwise you will have to meet with a tragic end.'

When Brahma pronounced His judgment, all the reptiles descended down and settled in the infernal regions. This occurred on the fifth day of the waxing moon in Śravaṇa. It is said that on this day those who feed with austerities the Nagas without partaking any spiced food will certainly be on friendly terms with the serpent race, freed from all fear of attack. (*Etatsarvam pancamyām teṣam jātam mahātmanām. Atah priyatithirdhanyā sarva pāpaharā śubhā. Etasyām samyuto yastu āmlam tu parivarjayet. Kṣīreṇa snāpayennāgam tasya yāsyanti mitratām*).

According to the account given in the *Mahābhārata*, the serpents were the offsprings of Kaśyapa by Kadru. Kaśyapa's second wife — Vinata and her children — the members of the feathered race — were kept under captivity due to a wager. When the sea was churned, ambrosia was the product and its distribution was arranged among the Devas to the detriment of the Dānavas. Garuda promised to give the serpents the celestial beverage on condition that they would set free the mother (Vinata) as also members of the winged race from bondage. This was agreed to by them. When Garuda placed the vessel containing the celestial drink on a darbha grass, Indra surreptitiously removed it. The serpents licked the grass, but to their dismay, they found that their tongues were cleft into two. On the day of the Nagapanchami, it is said that there will be no hostilities between the members of the feathered race and those of the reptilian kingdom. The worship of the Nagas on the Naga Panchami is observed in some places in India.

The Brahmavaivarta Purana contains an episode connected with the physician of the Gods (Dhanvantari), who as the myths say, came out at the time of the churning of the ocean and is viewed as an *amśa* (āspect) of Narayana. While on his way to Kailas, this Dhanvantari met the serpent chief Takṣaka and removed the poison from his fangs and rendered him powerless at the same time snatching away his crest jewel. The serpent king Vasuki as a protest directed his innumerable subjects to attack Dhanvantari. Consequently, the entire atmosphere was rendered poisonous. Dhanvantari's disciples swooned. Dhanvantari freed his followers by the use of charms and incantations thus defeating the army of the reptiles. They were reduced to such a plight that there was not even a single member of the race to carry the tidings to their master Vasuki. Vasuki implored his sister Gauri (Manasa or Jaratkaru, mother of Āstika) for help. By her efforts, the serpents were all restored to life. By extending her cruel looks against the followers of the celestial physician, she rendered them unconscious. Then a regular battle ensued. Manasa selected a lotus for her missile and directed it with her incantations towards Dhanvantari. The skilful physician reduced this powerful missile to ashes by his sighs (breath). The ashes were returned being directed as another missile against the celestial doctor, who with a clod of earth scattered them to the winds. The Śakti missile (pike or dart) was selected and applied by Manasa. Dhanvantari defended himself with the Śūla (spear or lance), which was given to him by Vishnu. The Mother of the serpents then set the noose (Nāgapāśa) for entangling her enemies. At this juncture, Dhanvantari remembered his preceptor Garuda. The Eagle-king reduced the noose into bits attacking with his powerful beak. The serpent princess did not yield; but instead directed the charmed ashes against the king of the feathered race. Garuda with his followers fanned the ashes with their wings with the result that they were scattered in all directions. In a fit of rage, the Naga princess took the trident as her next weapon and charged. Brahma and Śiva then intervened, when this terrible fight was brought to an end. The divine physician offered his prayers to Manasa, for having accepted peace. The Nagas were all satisfied and they came out with their smiling faces and their glittering hoods.

It is said that when a snake occupies a bed or lurks about in the house, or when one is bitten by a serpent or is wounded, or when there is an ant-hill in the house, or when a reptile has entwined the body, a prayer offered to Manasa (Jaratkaru) will render one immune against snake poison.

The Brahma Vaivarta Purana gives another story in the Krishna Khanda according to which there ensued a battle between Kāliya and the King of the feathered race. It so happened that the latter attacked the former without the least hesitation after propitiation of Vishnu. The serpent had to select a large and deep pool of the Jumna for protection against the raids of Garuda. The Eagle had been prevented from entering into it owing to the imprecations of the sage Saurabhi. When a fish had been seized by the bird and had its narrow escape by dropping into the deep waters of of the pool, the sage had cursed the King of birds thus: 'If in the event of your visit to this pool of mine hereafter, it will be quite certain that by virtue of the curse inflicted by me, you shall speedily be reduced to ashes.' (*Adya prabhṛti pakṣīndra yadyāgacchasi me hradam madīya śāpat tūrnam ca bhasmasādbhavitā dhruvam*).

The waters of the Jumna were contaminated with the poison of the serpent Kāliya. Krishna and Balarama were sporting on its banks with the cows and the cowherds. One day, it happened that the cows being weary drank the waters of the pool in which the dragon Kāliya was staying and quenched their thirst and fell dead. This news was carried to Krishna, who was able to find out the truth and revive the animals back to life. Krishna next jumped into the river, when the dragon held him in his grip as if he were an ordinary mortal. But the majestic and heroic lustre of Sri Hari burnt the dragon's neck and also the fangs. Being overpowered by the presence of the omniscient Lord, the Naga dragon prepared himself to abandon the life-breath. He vomitted blood and swooned instantaneously. On seeing his plight, the reptile inmates were greatly shocked. Some lurked away. Others bemoaned. At Surasa's (Kaliya's wife) remonstrances, the dragon was restored to life. Surasa and the Naga damsels were assigned an abode in Goloka. Hari made a duplicate form (shadow) of Surasa and sent it to the Kaliya dragon with directions to settle himself at Ramanaka.

According to Śaṁkara Saṁhita, Vishnu assumed the form of a blind boa-constrictor at Nava Dvipa, due to a curse inflicted on him by Parvati, the spouse of Śiva. The story goes that when Śiva and Parvati indulged in a game of dice, Vishnu had to officiate as an umpire. According to the terms of the wager, the person who lost the game had to surrender all the ornaments to the winner. This proved to be a moot question for Vishnu at a time when both the players asserted that they were the winners. Vishnu was in a fix and he sided with Śiva. Parvati felt insulted. She said, 'Look here, Vishnu, as an umpire, you have uttered falsehood. Let your form be changed instantaneously to that of a blind boa-constrictor.' (*Pasyata bhavatā viṣṇo madhyasthenāpi yanmṛṣā, proktam tattvam bhava kṣiprād andhājagara rūpavān*). Śiva consoled Vishnu by saying 'Oh, Mādhava, please be seated in meditation at Vatadvipa. You will obtain release from this spell when Vinayaka destroys the fiend Gajamukha and meets you.' (*Vatadvipe tapaḥ kṛtvā duscaram tisṭha mādhava vināyakastadākālāt hatvā gajamukhāsuram samāyāsyati tvam dṛṣtvā śāpa mokṣam samekṣyati)—Op. cit.*, 29-30.

King Nahusha who was inflated with arrogance while in his acme of power oppressed the seven sages and forced them to carry him on a palanquin. The dwarf sage Agastya was upset and he inflicted a curse on the king, when he fell down in the shape of a boa-constrictor.

Says the Kurma Purana thus : 'He who is Ananta (a snake) is none other than Janardana Himself. On Him rests the entire universe. This Ananta Sesha assumes the form of Kālāgni. That Yogin of a Kalasesha rests with Him and dwells in His mouth. *(Yo anantaḥ paṭhyate devo nāgarūpī janārdanaḥ. Tadādhāramidam sarvam sa kālāgnim samāsritah. Tamāviśya mahāyogi kālastadvadanoṣitah.—* XXIV, 27-28).

The serpent is thus indicative of time or death, which snatches away life (Kālamṛtyu). In Chapter LX of the Varaha Purana, the different limbs or organs of Vishnu are identified with the different celestial snakes. Thus, Ananta serves as the feet of Vishnu, while Vasuki is indicative of the waist. Taksaka in turn is the stomach. Karkotaka denotes the chest. The serpent Padma represents the neck, while Mahapadma covers the shoulders. Śankhapala signifies the neck while the serpent Kutila is symbolic with the head (Chap. LX).

In Hindu mythology, the planet Rahu (Dragon's head) is represented as having a serpent for its vehicle. The human intestine is of the shape of a snake. In Bhasa's Pancharatra, we find that the five vital airs are compared to the snakes which lurk inside an ant-hill. Just as from out of the hollows (openings) come out with panic the snakes at the time of a forest conflagration (touching the base of the ant-hill), the five vital airs, of a person who has reached the end of his life, depart from the indriyas (organs).—(*Act I*, X.10)

In India, Malaya, Indo-China, China, Japan, Mexico and several parts of America, there are temples in which the serpent is the ruling deity. The Nagas were not mere gods in the mythology. They had three forms, viz. : (*a*) fully human figures with snakes emerging from their necks as also heads, (*b*) common serpents guarding treasures (kṣetrapāla), and (*c*) with the upper half of the body in human shape and the lower part entirely snake like.

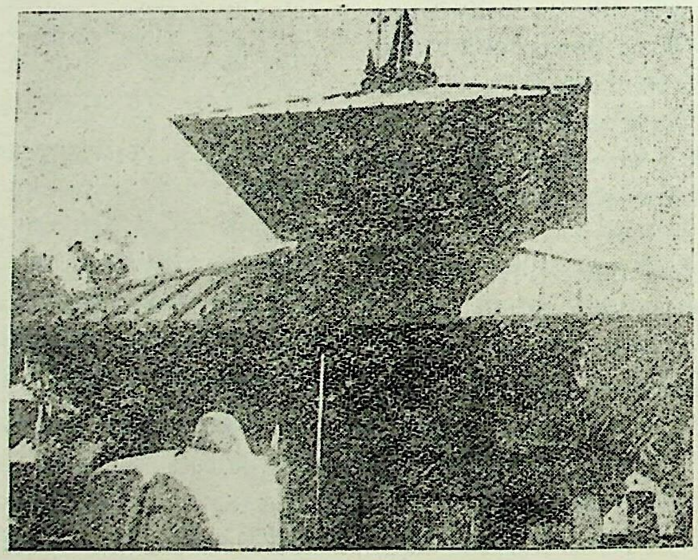
A race of men appear to have lived in historical times being known as Nagas. Naga tribes lived in different parts of India. It has been proved from the history of migrations into America that the Nagas of India were also emigrants to America and that the snake cult was introduced by them in that continent.

In the *Amsumadbhedāgama*, a Naga chief is styled as Nagadeva. In icons, this figure is represented as possessing three eyes and four arms, besides a beautiful countenance. The head of a Naga is adorned with the hood of a five-headed cobra. The front hands of this figure represent the Varada and Abhaya poses, while the rear ones hold serpents. In *Silpa Ratna* and other Agamic texts, the Nagas are described as semi-human (the portion below the waist being that of a snake). These figures possess hoods which are always of odd numbers (one, three, five and seven). In their hands they hold a sword as also a shield. The seven important snakes as described in the Puranic lore are Vasuki, Takṣaka, Karkotaka, Padma, Mahapadma, Śankhapala and Kulika. The *Maya Silpa* gives particulars of the colours of the various Nagas. Thus, Vasuki is of pearl-white complexion while Takṣaka shines with the red hue and bears on his head the *svastika* emblem. Karkotaka is of black colour. Padma is rosy like the lotus. The figures of the Nagas are decorated with ornaments made of coral as also with white streaks. The trident is a conspicuous mark on the hood of Mahapadma. Śankhapala is of yellow hue, while his hood bears a white streak as an ornamentation. Kulika, who is red in colour is adorned with the crescent moon. All these figures possess two hands with human heads. A rosary and a water jug are held by them in their two hands.

SIVARATRI IN NEPAL

N. K. KRISHNAMURTHI

Śivaratri is the night which is dear to Lord Śiva. It falls on the 14th day of the dark fortnight in the month of Magha, corresponding to February-March. The observance of the Vrata frees a man from sins committed either wittingly or unwittingly. The night is divided into four quarters and pious people keep awake all the night. Śiva is worshipped as Iśana in the first, as Aghora in the second, as Vamadeva in the third and as Sadyojata in the fourth quarter of the night. Next day in the grey of the morning the puja would be concluded. The Vedas declare *Siva* (Rudra) as one of the Supreme Deities who cuts asunder all our tangled bonds. *Rātri* stands for peace and happiness. *Vrata* is associated with fasting. It does not mean a mere physical fasting but a withdrawal of the mind from all the snares of the senses.



Temple of Pasupatinath in Nepal, near Khatmandu

There are some well known pilgrim centres in India which are visited during Śivaratri— Gokarn (in Mysore State), Kālahasti and Sri Sailam (in Andhra Pradesh) and Paśupatinath (in Nepal).

The temple of Paśupatinath dedicated to Lord Śiva, is situated two miles north-east of Kathmandu at a point where the river Bagmati forces her way through a wooded gorge. The

Nepalese consider this place as their Varanasi and the Bagmati as the holy Ganges. The golden roofs of the temple lend a unique beauty and charm. In the *Sanctum Sanctorum* there is the four-faced image of Lord Śiva. A huge copper-gilt image of the kneeling bull is placed on a high pedestal in front of the Linga. The priests hail from South India as we find in Badrinath and Kedarnath. Tradition says that Ādi Śankaracharya visited Nepal.

The temple dedicated to Guhyeswari is on the other side of the Bagmati. There is a perennial spring which stands as a symbol of Śakti. Its waters are considered sacred.

Paśupatinath is the guardian deity of Nepal. Its name and symbol are struck on the coins of the country. In it they find their shield and armour. The Hindus as well as the Buddhists pay their homage to Paśupatinath and it reveals in an abundant measure the perfect harmony between them.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Swami Vijnananda is of the Ramakrishna Order.

Swami Premeshananda's article on 'Swami Vivekananda and Indian Culture' is the fourth instalment of the series. The last instalment will appear in the next issue.

Sri R. Ramakrishnan is Headmaster, R.C. High School, Nachandupatti, Thiruchi Dt.

Prof. K. P. S. Choudhary is the Head of the Department of Philosophy and Psychology in A.P.S.M. College, Barauni.

"The Great Equation" is the sixth instalment of the article by Sri S. K. Gupta, Calcutta.

Sri K. E. Parthasarathi is from Madras.

Sri M. V. Sridatta Sarma is in the services of the Maharaja of Mysore and interested in the Pauranic lore. His contributions have often appeared in the *Vedanta Kesari*.

Sri N. K. Krishnamurthi is from Madras.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE CENTENARY OF SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

The Centenary of Swami Vivekananda has been celebrated in several countries of the world during the year beginning with January 17, 1963. Now that the celebrations have almost come to a close, it is but proper and necessary to assess what we have achieved, individually and collectively, during this centenary year. It is no doubt grand and good to have institutions which will be dedicated to the service of the poor and the downtrodden, of the illiterate and the diseased, in the name of Swamiji. But there is something grander and nobler, something illumining and enlightening, something enduring and everlasting of which Swamiji was a great exemplar, viz. spirituality.

Swamiji had been during this year, perhaps presented to us from many platforms and by a host of lecturers as a cyclonic monk, as a great Karma Yogi, as a sannyasin who aroused India from her slumber. But if we confine ourselves to this part of his life we shall certainly miss the mainspring of all his activity. Time and again we should remind ourselves of the fact that Swamji was a monk first and that all his actions had their source in renunciation. We have everyone of us to do work and working for others' sake is noble indeed, but along with it we shall have to learn a lesson from this other aspect of his life—of withdrawal into the Self, of meditation, of devotion and of yoga. Tossed on the waves of the ocean of Karma man is prone to lose his anchor, if there is not the strong sustaining power of spiritual practice. It is now not a conflict between *Karma* and *Jnana*, it is not a question of work supplanting worship but worship supporting work. Many times Swamiji himself was plunged in doubt whether what he was doing was in consonance with the teachings of his Master. He consulted his brother disciples, obtained assurance from the Holy Mother and repeatedly sought direct guidance from Sri Ramakrishna himself. He did not take a single step in the direction of work until he received infallible indication from Sri Ramakrishna about the exactitude of his conclusions.

Karma Yoga is not an easy path if it is devoid of devotion to God. Sri Krishna warns Arjuna, *gahanā karmaṇo gatiḥ*, inscrutable are the ways of action. Motiveless work is a rare thing. However unselfishly man may start, soon he finds his self creeping in, he knows not from where and how. Sometimes men so much delude themselves that they are doing motiveless work that by the time they awaken to their fault they find themselves in deep waters. At least the craving for name and fame mars the beauty of action and pulls man down from his ideal. It is therefore, incumbent on man that he should dive deep into his Self every day and search his heart how far he is on the right road. The other alternative is to think oneself as an instrument in the hands of the Lord. Otherwise all his actions like a house built on sand would be in vain. Therefore the foundation of all work should be on spirituality. This is what is reflected in Swamiji's life. To understand this and then to follow it up is what the individual must try to do. And as far as this is put in practice so far has one achieved one's aim in celebrating the centenary.

Swamiji said to the people of India to eschew jealousy and hatred, and to give up privileges of every type. To what extent we have attempted to put this in our day-to-day life, collective as well as individual, while we were remembering Swamiji, to that extent we would have celebrated his centenary well. To what extent his message of unity of all beings and of universal religion is spread and lived in life to that extent our efforts to remember him have gained their purpose. For the celebrations of the advent of spiritual persons serve not only to honour them but to inculcate their message in our lives. Let us strive to keep up the enthusiasm, this centenary has generated, by a serious study of the life and message of Swamiji, his great Master and the Holy Mother, so that we may get active help in guiding our faltering footsteps in this dreary world.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

IN THE VISION OF GOD, PARTS 1 & 2: Pub. Bhavan's Book University Series, Bombay-7. Pp. 270 & 264. Price Rs. 2.50 each.

Appropriately entitled *In the Vision of God*, this work is a happy sequel to the author's *In Quest of God*, in which he has described his wanderings over the length and breadth of India in search of God and of men who have *seen* God. A new chapter opened in the life of Ramdas on his return from the pilgrimage tour and the present book is a graphic and instructive account of the next nine years of his life spent partly in austerities in caves and such isolated places and partly in tours in the company of devotees and disciples.

How far is it possible to have dealings with ordinary men and things after the attainment of a higher consciousness in oneself? Is it at all possible to apply the values of that higher realm in this gross world of grosser passions? These are questions that constantly come up before every thinking person. Swami Ramdas's candid account gives a full answer to such doubts. Once you make it an act of faith, Swamiji says in effect, that since you are surrendered to the Divine all that comes to you is the Will of the Divine, there is no problem. Not only when men are nice and helpful but equally when they are unhelpful and belligerent, it is the Lord that accosts you in the guise of circumstances. The daily life of Ramdas has been a shining example of this elevating faith and in the highest tradition of spiritual India.

M. P. PANDIT.

THE PROBLEM OF MEANING IN INDIAN PHILOSOPHY: By R. C. Pandeya. Pub. Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi. Pp. 299+vi. Price Rs. 15.

The average student of Indian philosophy, as a rule is unaware of the existence of such problems and conveniently ignores them relegating them to Grammar or to Purva Mimamsa. In either case he makes no serious attempt to understand them clearly. Dr Pandeya has done a valuable piece of work in drawing attention to this most important and obscure problem of meaning of language. As the blurb says, he 'has presented a systematic and critical account of vast and variegated discussions on the problem of meaning obtaining in various systems in Indian philosophy.' The author modestly says that he has only put together views expressed by thinkers in the past. This kind of work is what is exactly wanted at present in greater dimensions.

In the first part of the work, the learned author gives a brief historical survey of the philosophy of language and argues that the problem of meaning is legitimate in Indian philosophy. In the second, he discusses the usual topics like nouns and verbs and their meaning. The chapter on Sabdabodha is more important and deals with the ways in which the meanings of sentences are cognized. The author gives a summary account of the different positions held by the Mimamsakas and the Naiyayikas in this connection. Dr Pandeya clearly discusses the rival theories of *prakarata vada* and *samsargata vada, abhitanvaya* and *anvitabhidana vada* and about the nature of meaning, the nature of the universals etc. Lastly he takes up the *sphota vada* and explains it and in the next chapter he attempts to refute the criticisms against the *sphota vada* by Kumarila Bhatta and here we see the work at its weakest. The replies are hardly convincing and are merely on the pattern of the Grammarians and make no attempt to evaluate the criticisms in an impartial manner. The *prima facie* arguments are not correctly and fairly stated. Kumarila does not say, e.g. that the song of a cuckoo is a word nor that a word can exist without a meaning. The point he emphasises is that a word is perceived by the ear and the ear hears only the letters. Hence the word is nothing more than the series of letters. A spoken word may remain without meaning to the hearer until he learns what it means. In the same way a word may be a mere jumble of some syllables. The title of a word cannot be denied to them. Nor can we accept the author's contention that letters, if they are eternal, cannot be spoken. Our speaking does not in any way affect their eternity. A critical perusal of the chapters on *sphota* and on sentences in *Sloka Vartika* will go a great way in proving the unsoundness of many of the statements made by the author.

The book, nevertheless, deserves a careful perusal since it enables us to grasp the various facets of the philosophy of language as discussed by the several eminent thinkers of the past. At the same time it would have been more useful if the arguments of both parties were given more fully in their own words which would make the reader decide the worth of the several positions. It is interesting to note that barring Mandana Misra not a single Advaitin of repute has advocated the *sphota vada*.

The list of errata is too large and this may be avoided in the second edition of the work.

S. RAJAGOPALA SASTRI

ESSAYS IN PHILOSOPHY: Presented to Dr T. M. P. Mahadevan on his fiftieth birthday. Ganesh & Co., Madras-17. Pp. 527. Price Rs. 25.

One can hardly speak of this publication in any but the most superlative terms. Designed as a token of appreciation of a famous Madras Savant of Advaita, this book contains 52 essays, every line of it is obviously the result of deep study and research, compiled by scholars of philosophy spread throughout the world. Whether our Western contacts have been fruitful or otherwise, might often be debated upon: but going through these pages, one is struck by the unusually large number of Western scholars who have made the study of Hindu Vedanta their life work. Their own contribution to the solution of many a problem (which is apparently still unsolved) in Vedanta doctrines, has been enormous; and that has been a priceless gain. Mr J. F. Stall strives for a correlation between language and philosophy, and has brought to the fore, the contribution which Indian philosophy has made in that direction. Mr Peter A Bertocci's is a scholarly contribution on the inter-relation of Brahman and the finite person, in the light of our three systems. Mr J. H. K. Norton offers a new background for the study of Vishitadvaita. Mr J. W. De Jong shows clearly how Buddhism has successfully tackled the problem of the Absolute. This is followed by Hajme Nakamura's thesis on Buddhism. Mr Quentin Gibson contests the view that the different schools of philosophy are merely different paths leading to one truth. He would much rather prefer an assimilation and absorption of the various schools; Elizabeth Rankin's is an exhaustive study of Socrates, Kier Kegaard and Nietzche. Mr Andrew Van Melsen opines that technology and the quest for the infinite are inter-related. Mr Karl H. Potter does not regard Indian philosophy as escapist or mystical. Mr S. S. Barlingay finds the principles of Indian logic as well developed as their modern counterpart. Mr Ninian Smart's Empiricism & Religion, is a much needed reminder in the modern quest for `common philosophical doctrines. Mr W. H. Harris predicates Godhead thus: 'God is in events, not simply in concepts: in verbs, not in nouns. He is discovered in life, activity, and subjectivity rather than in the definitions.' Mr R. V. De Smet's remarkable thesis on 'Patterns of Causality,' accords a high place to Sankara's theory of Paramatma, who is identical with Para Brahma, the pradhana, nimitta karana and the artha of all world realities. Mr E. R. Marozzi's 'Psychoanalysis & Vedanta' is an illuminating study.

Swami Nikhilananda is positive that advaita alone could curb religious fanaticism and bigotry. Both Swami Paramatmananda and Mr N. Subrahmanyam find a close parallelism between the tenets of Vaishnavism and Christian thought. Dr P. Nagaraja Rao gives perhaps the clearest exposition of Sri Madhva's system in Indian philosophy. Intertwined with it is the article on the Nature of Time by Mr M. M. Sharif. Mr S. Rajagopala Sastri's 'Atma Vada' is a valuable collection of thoughts on Atma jnana, which alone 'gives transcendent bliss and the only means for the realization of Self.'

Through Mr Fernand Brunner, one comes to know of a blooming French philosopher, Simone

Weil, who was cut off when barely 34, but who had succeeded in evolving a philosophy which is not only akin to but is also 'dependent on Indian philosophic thought.'

Dr V. Raghavan maintains, pressing into service many quotations from the Manu Smriti, that the Gospel of Karma Yoga in the Gita had had its earliest exponent in that law giver. Mr T. P. Minakshisundaram deals with the 'Agamic Tattvas'; and Mr M. Varadarajan has given a pen picture of the Tamil mystic, Thayumanavar. Dr V. A. Devasenapathi discusses with clarity and acumen, the place of Soul in Saiva Siddhanta. Mr M. P. Pandit deals with the chakras in Sri Aurobindo's Yoga. Dr P. K. Sundaram's 'Realism of Sankara and Maya' is a close and critical study.

With his characteristic erudition, the editor, Dr C. T. K. Chari has attempted a re-appraisal of the issues which have ever divided Absolutists and Personalists in East and West.

Mr R. Bhaskaran is definitely of the view that a modern State needs always a philosophy to sustain it. Mr S. P. Adinarayanan considers that the Gandhian technique consisted of spiritual weapons, which could always be put into practice by men of courage and faith. Other brilliant writers include amongst others Mr M. M. Bhatt, Mr T. V. Mahalingam, Mr N. Venkata Rao, Mr K. K. Pillai, Mr. S. S. Raju Naidu and Mr M. Rajamanickam.

Perhaps it would not be too much to say that compilations like the present one will be of most valuable help and guidance to understand our religion and philosophy.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

BENGALI

PUNYATIRTHA BHARAT: By Swami Divyatmananda. Pub. S. N. Roy, Mahakali Press, Calcutta. Pp. 344. Price Rs. 10.

Impelled by a strong urge from his very boyhood to cover the entire length and breadth of India, the writer of this weighty book has taken pains to visit every centre of pilgrimage of importance from Kailas to Kanyakumari. Each place has touched him in its own special way and it is a delight to travel with the author from centre to centre. The book is illustrated with several plates, the most notable of which is a magnificent picture of the beautiful *Linga* in the cave of Amarnath. There is also a striking map of India which shows seven hallowed *kshetras* as representing the seven *cakras* in the human body; it starts with the *muladhara* (Kanyakumari) and leads up to *sahasrara* (Kailas).

'To a superficial view,' says the Swamiji, 'India stands divided in a hundred ways — different languages, different cultures, different races, different natural settings. All these cover up her undying unity. It is in order that this consciousness of unity may not be of the spiritual order alone but also of a concrete nature that all the people of India have been linked together in an unbreakable chain of holy places and their intimate associations with one another.'

M. P. PANDIT.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

AT SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS

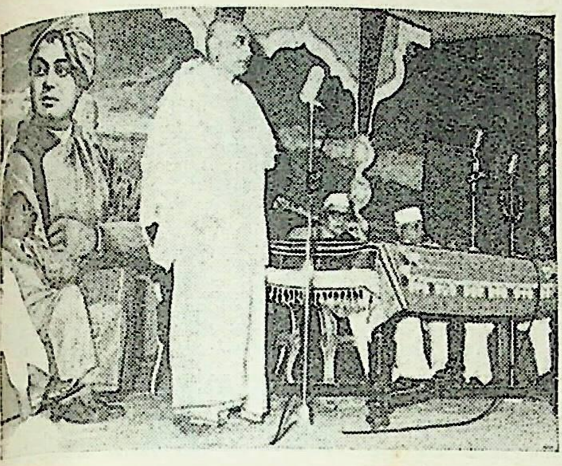
On January 10, 1964, commenced the 18 day celebrations of Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary, at the Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras with the opening of an Exhibition by Sri Bishnuram Medhi, the Governor of Madras. The special features of the Exhibition were (1) Some incidents from the life of Swamiji displayed in clay models by the superb workmen of Krishnagar, West Bengal. (2) 39 paintings and fret work depicting scenes from Swamiji's life. (3) A stall of the German Embassy marking places visited by Swamiji. (4) A U.S.I.S. stall exhibiting some rare photographs of Swamiji in America as also the photos of some Americans who came in close contact with Swamiji. (5) Stalls of the different institutions of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in Madras and (6) A stall showing a picture of Swamiji at Kanyakumari as the wandering Monk and another in Chicago posture — all drawn in Rangoli (coloured powders).

Declaring open the exhibition the Governor said that the exhibition was a unique one as it brought the life incidents of Swami Vivekananda vividly before one's eyes in the three dimension figures of the clay models and paintings and fret work. Further he said that the Swami saw the vision of a spiritually united world, boldly advocated the breaking of all shackles that fettered the freedom of thought and proclaimed the unity of mankind. His life and message gave an impetus for ushering in a new era in the history of the civilization of man.

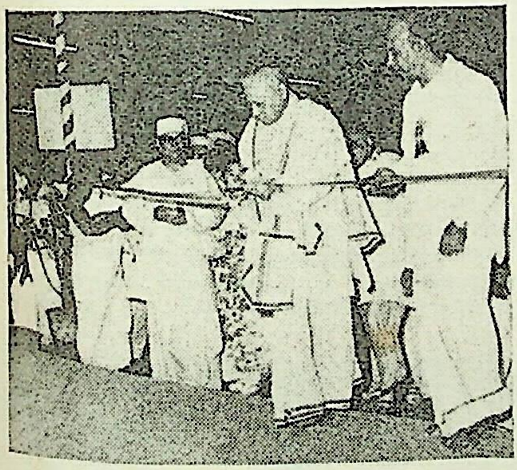
Sri A. M. Murugappa Chettiar who was the chief guest of the day referred to Swamiji's works as 'priceless treasures' and called upon the younger generation to study them with care and devotion.

Swami Kailasananda presiding on the occasion spoke about the life and message of Swamiji. Earlier Mr. T. V. Viswanatha Aiyar welcomed the Governor and the gathering. Swami Suddhasatwananda, Secretary, Swami Vivekananda Centenary Committee gave an account of the Exhibition. Mr. C. Ramaswami Mudaliar, Secretary Exhibition Committee proposed a vote of thanks.

On January 11, there was Nadaswaram programme in the afternoon for about an hour. Swami Prabhavananda, the Head of the Vedanta Society of Southern California, Hollywood, U.S.A. who declared open the centenary building and Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University were received with *Purnakumbham*, at the entrance to the pandal specially erected for the purposes of the meetings. After prayer and opening song, Swami Suddhasatwananda welcomed the President of the Day's function, Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, the delegates of the Inter-Religious Conference and the gathering. He also introduced the delegates for the conference. Swami Kailasananda read some of the messages received in connection with the celebrations.

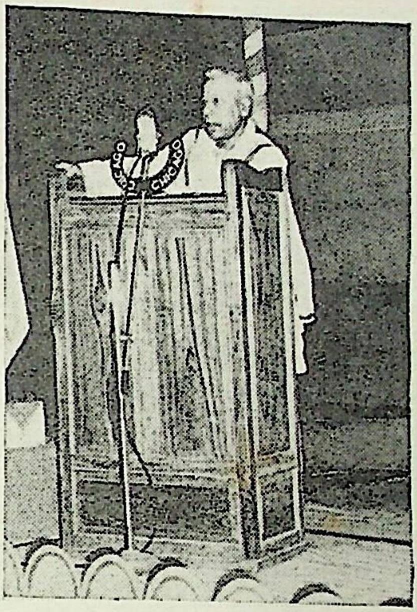


Swami Kailasananda, addressing the gathering on 10th January 1964, The Governor of Madras, Sri Bishnuram Medhi is seen seated



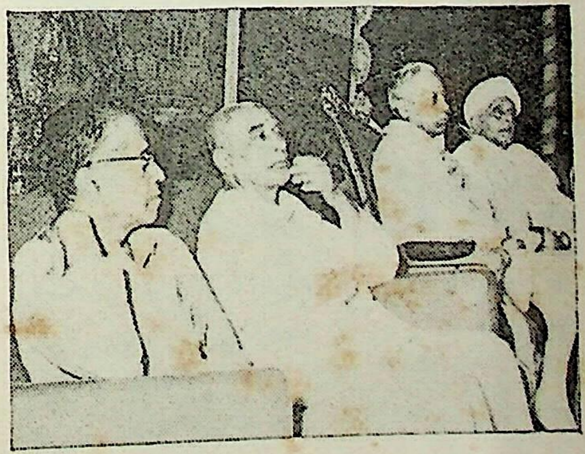
Swami Prabhavananda declaring open the Centenary Building

Swami Prabhavananda inaugurating the Inter-Religious conference said that Swami Vivekananda was a man of God. He did not belong to any particular religion or sect but to everyone, so it is meet that an Inter-Religious Conference is held in connection with his birth centenary. Further he said that the source of all religions was revelation, though there were differences and conflicts about dogmas and creeds. This was brought home to the west in modern times by Swami Vivekananda.



Swami Prabhavananda speaking at the Conference

Dr. (Mrs.) Maria Burgi, D.Phil. of Switzerland spoke on Swami Vivekananda's impact on Western thought. She said 'With the appearance of Swami Vivekananda, Europe began to be more and more aware of the fact that although India could teach neither social reform nor mechanical improvements she had the authority to teach something infinitely more important viz. the highest truths of the mind, of the heart and of the soul of man, which no time, no place and no cause can contradict.' Mr. Nishin Uchigaki, from Osaka, Japan then spoke on 'Swami Vivekananda through the eyes of a Japanese.'



Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar at the Inter-Religious Conference

Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar in his presidential address said 'Vivekananda communicated the message of the East to a receptive but not wholly convinced people of the West—the message that no one need abandon his own religion provided his eyes were fixed upon the ultimate goal.' He continued, 'It was Vivekananda, more than any other teacher of his generation, who inspired his brethren to accept traditional culture and values.'

Sri K. Balasubramania Aiyar proposed a vote of thanks. After the meeting there was Harikatha by Balakrishna Sastrigal on 'Vivekananda Vijayam'.

On the morning (8-30 to 10-30 a.m.) of the third day of the celebrations there was *parayana* of the life and complete works of Swamiji.

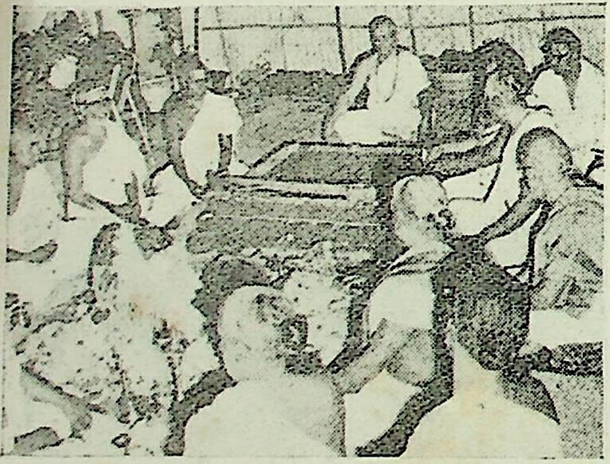
In the afternoon (3 p.m. to 5 p.m.) there was a children's programme consisting of talks, drama, etc.

The first session of the Inter-Religious Conference started under the presidentship of Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar at 5-30 p.m. He also released six volumes each of the complete works of Swamiji in Tamil and Telugu.

Prof. S. A. Jain, M.A.,L.T. from Madurai represented Jainism. Dr. Anthony Elenjimittam, Editor, *Basic Education*, Bombay, spoke on Christianity and Sri Dastoor N. D. Minocha Homiji, M.A. of Bombay presented Zoroastrianism.

After the meeting the students of the Ramakrishna Mission High School, T. Nagar, presented some scenes of the Parliament of Religions of Chicago.

On January 13, 1964 the Rudra Yagam was performed according to Vedic rites by priests in the morning, (7 a.m. to 12 noon).

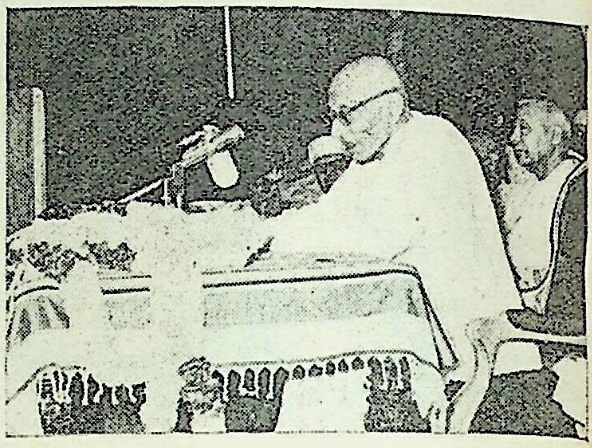


The Rudra Yagam being performed at the Pandal

The second session of the Inter-religious Conference was held in the evening. Swami Suddhasatwananda welcomed the gathering. Sri C. Rajagopalachariar presided. He also released a comprehensive life of Swami Vivekananda in Tamil written by Sri R. Ganapati of *Kalki*, as a labour of love. The latter was presented with some books as a token of gratitude for his service.

Bhikku Ananda Kausalyan of Vidyalankara University, Ceylon spoke on Buddhism.

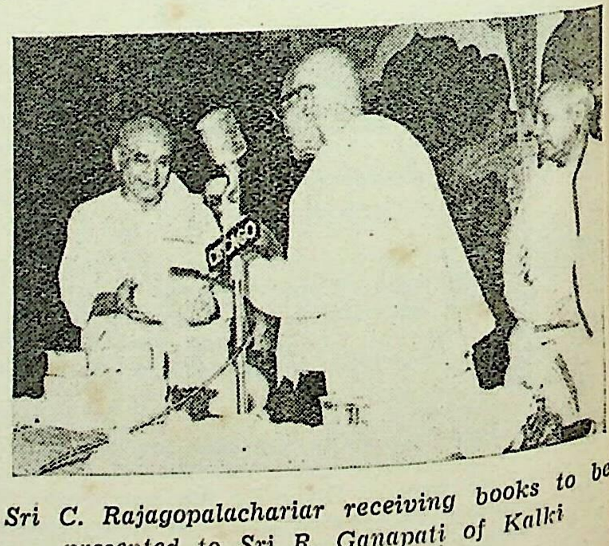
Dr. Gopal Singh, M.P. from Delhi who spoke next on 'Sikhism' said that Guru Nanak was emphatic that God belonged to everyone. For those who doubted the existence of God, because they could not see Him, the Guru had said that one could only feel and experience God in the same way as one experienced joy and happiness. Compassion and contentment, he said, were the two watchwords of the Sikh religion.



Sri C. Rajagopalachariar delivering his presidential address

Dr. Abdul Wahab Bukhari, Principal, New College, Madras who spoke next said that Islam firmly believed in the existence and suzerainty of God. He also affirmed that there was no essential disparity in the basic truths of the various religions.

Mr. Dastoor D. N. Minocha Homiji also spoke for a few minutes. In his concluding speech Rajaji said, 'Swami Vivekananda explained to the world the message of Vedanta and by the same message drove fear and inferiority complex out of the Indian mind.'



Sri C. Rajagopalachariar receiving books to be presented to Sri R. Ganapati of Kalki

Mr. K. Balasubramania Aiyar proposed a vote of thanks.

The Third session of the Inter-Religious Conference began on that day at 5-30 p.m. Swami Prabhavananda presiding. Dr. P. Nagaraja Rao, M.A., D.Litt., Reader in Philosophy, Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati spoke on Dvaita, Dr Devasenapati, Reader in Philosophy, Madras University, spoke on Saiva Siddhanta, Sri Agnihotram Ramanuja Tatachariar of Kumbakonam presented the Vishistadvaita view and Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan, M.A., Ph.D., Head of the Department of Philosophy, spoke on Advaita.

January 15, 1964: In the morning there were recitation competitions for school students. The fourth session of the Inter-Religious Conference was held in the evening under the presidentship of Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam, Chief Minister of Madras. Sri T. L. Venkatrama Aiyar, Retired Judge, Supreme Court speaking in Sanskrit, said that the best way of paying homage to Swamiji was to study Sanskrit and spiritual literature and know about the greatness of our culture. Swami Vidyatmananda, one of the Editors of *Vedanta and the West* said, 'what endeared Swami Vivekananda to an American were his pragmatic approach, single minded dedication to a cause, informality and sense of humour.' Mr C. R. Pattabhiraman, Union Deputy Minister for Planning, Employment and Labour who spoke next referred to Swamiji's message of Vedanta to the West. Swami Ranganathananda, Secretary, The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, Calcutta spoke on the four yogas as interpreted by Swami Vivekananda. Mr. M. Janakiraman who drew the Rangoli pictures of Swamiji was presented with some books as a mark of appreciation of his art.

Sri M. Bhaktavatsalam, presenting some books to Sri M. Janakiraman for his Rangoli art.

Earlier, Swami Suddhasatwananda welcomed the gathering.

After the meeting there were fire-works in the compound of the P. S. High School, opposite the Math.

Swami Brahmanandaji's Birthday fell on January 16, 1964. There was special puja and Homa in the shrine in the morning. In the afternoon the Centenary Celebration of Swamiji was held at the Madras University. Dr. A. Lakshmanaswami Mudaliar, Vice-Chancellor, Madras University presided. At the meeting Dr. A. L. Mudaliar announced that the Madras University will be instituting a chair in Philosophy, Eastern Culture and Comparative Religion which would be known as Vivekananda Chair. He called upon the youths to become strong and courageous and emulate the example of Vivekananda.

Swami Ranganathananda addressing the meeting referred to Swamiji's exhortation to imbibe 'a man-making and character-building education'. Dr T. M. P. Mahadevan proposed a vote of thanks.

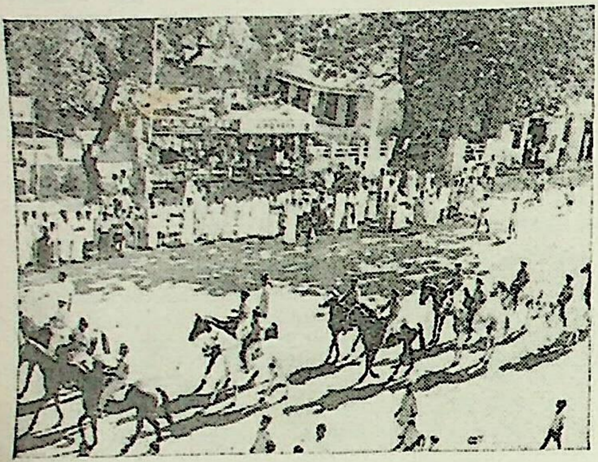
At the Math on that day there was Ramanam after Arati in the shrine. Swamis Jnanatmananda, Japananda and Prabhavananda spoke about their reminiscences of Swami Brahmananda after the Ramanam.

On January 17, the Women's Conference was held at 6 p.m. Srimati Lakshmi N. Menon, Deputy Minister, External Affairs, Government of India presided. There were speeches on Sri Andal by Sister R. S. Subbalakshmi (in Tamil), on Sister Nivedita by Pravrajika Ajayaprana of Sri Sarada Math, on Saint Rabaya by Mrs. Mahmooda Haja Shereef, "On What Swami Vivekananda means to me" by Miss Kumiko Inoue, delegate from Japan and by Swami Prabhavananda on Swami Vivekananda. After the distribution of prizes to winners in the competitions the president addressed the gathering. Mrs Kamala Sarathy proposed a vote of thanks.

Earlier Miss Iravathy, Principal, Queen Mary's College welcomed the gathering. This meeting was held in the Centenary Hall.

On January 18, 1964, there were essay and oratorical competitions for College students in the morning and noon. The concluding session of the Women's Conference was held at 5-30 p.m. Swami Ranganathananda presided. Smt. Vajreswari, M.A., Principal Training College, Tuticorin spoke on 'Sita', Pravrajika Atma Prana of Sri Sarada Math, spoke on the Holy Mother, Miss G. Samuel, Principal, St. Christopher Training College for Women, Madras, spoke on St. Theresa and Smt. Mani Sahukar of Bombay addressed the gathering on Meera. Dr. (Mrs.) Maria Burgi spoke on Swami Vivekananda. There was Kali Kirtan after the meeting for about an hour by the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order.

On January 19, 1964, a procession more than half a mile long started from the Corporation Tennis Stadium, near Egmore Railway Station and then proceeded along Chintadripet, Mount Road etc. to the Vivekananda House at Marina, covering almost the same route as Swamiji did when he returned from the West. A statue (model of the bronze one that has been installed near the Vivekananda House, formerly known as Ice House), 11 feet high brought up the rear of the procession. Two elephants with *Purna Kumbham* formed the vanguard. Seventeen arches were erected on the route to bring to mind the event of the triumphal entry of Swamiji after his return from the West to Madras. For so was he received in Madras in 1897. There were eighteen bhajan parties in the procession. Other special features of it were dummy-horse, karagam, peacock and other dances. Thousands of people lined on either side of the road when the procession passed. Two short speeches were made by Swamis Ranganathananda (in English) and Nishkamananda (in Tamil) at the Marina, after the termination of the procession.



A view of the procession of 19th January 1964

January 20, 1964 was a Students' Day. Swami Ranganathananda presided over the day's celebrations. Two student representatives spoke on the occasion. Swami Swahananda, Secretary, Ramakrishna Mission, Delhi, and Swami Suddhasatwananda spoke on Swamiji's idea of education. Swami Ranganathananda also distributed the prizes to the winners of the essay and oratorical competitions.

There were music performances by Sri Ariyakudi Ramanuja Aiyangar and party and Sri Madurai Mani Iyer and party on the 21st and 22nd respectively.

On 23rd there was playing on Sarod by Master Deepak Mukherji of Bombay. Sri Pavitra Kumar Acharya sang bhajan, and Sri Ramarao Parsatwar of Bombay gave a performance on Jaltarang. Sri Muraliswamy of Bombay played on Tabla.

Gita Homa was performed in the main hall of the Math from 8 a.m. onwards on January 24, 1964. Drama on Swamiji's life in five languages by staff and students of the Vivekananda College, Madras, was the highlight of the evening function. The pandal where the drama was held was packed to overflowing.

On Saturday the 25th January, 1964, there was Inter-collegiate sports at the Rajaratnam Stadium, Madras from 3 to 5-30 p.m.

In the evening there were Physical Feats at the Math pandal by Prof. Bishnucharan Ghosh and party of Calcutta.

On January 26, 1964, there was Chandi Homa by the Swamis of the Ramakrishna Order in the morning. In the evening the final session of the Inter-Religious Conference commenced at 4-30 p.m. Sri K. S. Ramaswami Sastriar presided. Sri K. V. Jagannathan, Editor, *Kalaimagal*, Sri K. Balasubramania Aiyar, M.L.C., and Sri Panchapagesa Iyer, M.A., spoke on Swami Vivekananda's influence on modern thought, Swami Vivekananda's ideal of science, and Swami Vivekananda's contribution to modern resurgence of India respectively. The first speaker spoke in Tamil, the other speeches were in English. Mr. E. Brown of San Francisco, U.S.A. spoke about his personal reminiscences of Swamiji. There were Physical Feats after the meeting, by Prof. Bishnucharan Ghosh and party of Calcutta.

The final day of the celebrations fell on Monday the 27th January, 1964, on which about 3,000 Daridranarayanas were fed in the P. S. High School compound. In the evening there was a Jaltarang performance by Sri Ramarao Parsatwar of Bombay after which a procession was taken around the four mada streets of Sri Kapaleeswarar Temple with the pictures of Sri Ramakrishna, Holy Mother and Swamiji placed in a well-lighted and tastefully decorated chariot.

On the morning of the last day of the celebrations, fruits and sweets were distributed to patients at the T.B. Sanatorium in Madras.

On all days before the meetings commenced, prayers were offered and opening songs were sung. All the functions were well attended. Nearly a lakh of people visited the Exhibition. More than 40 monks of the Ramakrishna order from different centres participated in the celebrations.

The hundred-and-twentyninth birthday Tithipuja of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna falls on February 15, 1964.

.... *Be bold and face*
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
Swami Vivekananda

THE VEDANTA KESARI

VOL. L MARCH 1964 No. 11

PANCADAŚĪ

द्विधा विधाय चेकैकं चतुर्धा प्रथमं पुनः । स्वस्वेतर द्वितीयांशैर्योजनात् पञ्च पञ्च ते ॥ २७ ॥

Ekaikam, each one (of the subtle elements) ; *dvidhā,* in two ; *vidhāya,* dividing ; *punaḥ,* again ; *prathamam,* the first (part) ; *caturdhā,* into four ; (*vidhāya,* dividing) ; *sva sva,* their own ; *itara,* other (than) ; *dvitīyāmśaiḥ,* with the second parts ; *yojanāt,* because of uniting ; *te,* they (*ākāśa* and other subtle elements) ; *panca panca* (each of the five gross elements will be containing all) five, five (subtle elements).

Note : Now, this process of *pancīkaraṇa* is being described.

27. Each one of the subtle elements is first of all divided into two. Then the first portion of each is again divided into four and each such one fourth portion of every element is united with the second portions of the elements other than the particular element of which it forms a part. Thus each gross element came to have all the five subtle elements in it. (This is the way of Pancīkaraṇa).

तैरण्डस्तत्र भुवनं भोग्य भोगाश्रयोद्भवः । हिरण्यगर्भः स्थूलेऽस्मिन् देहे वैश्वानरो भवेत् ॥ २८ ॥

Taiḥ, with the gross elements thus formed ; *aṇḍaḥ,* the egg, (*Brahmaṇḍa,* the universe) ; *tatra,* in that ; *bhuvanam,* the worlds ; *bhogya,* food, like cereals ; *bhogāśraya,* the bodies (suitable to experience the good and evil in the different worlds) ; *udbhavaḥ,* creation (took place as per the command of Īśvara) ; *asmin,* in this ; *sthūla,* gross ; *dehe,* body ; *hiraṇyagarbhaḥ* ; *vaiśvānaraḥ,* (known as the) Vaiśvānara ; *bhavet,* becomes.

28. With the gross elements as the material cause is produced the Brahmaṇḍa or the universe, in which there are included the fourteen mythical worlds — seven heavens and seven nether regions. Again from these elements were produced by the command of Īśvara, different kinds of food and bodies suitable to live in those worlds. And Hiranyagarbha, who is Īśvara in the form of totality embodied of all subtle bodies, then comes to be known as Vaiśvānara.

NATURE OF THE SELF OR THE ATMAN

It is the greatest tragedy of life that most of the people do not know themselves. This statement may appear as a fallacy. Who does not know himself? Ask anyone and he will reply who he is: son of so and so; a goldsmith, a soldier, an engineer, an administrator, a scholar, a merchant, a diplomat, a blacksmith, or a carpenter; blind or lame, fair or black, wealthy or poor; joyous or sorrowful. What more does he need to know? Is this not enough for his worldly purpose? No doubt a worldly man need know nothing more. But there come in the life of everyone moments when everything seems to go out of gear, symphony of life breaks down, jarring notes impinge on it and the world seems to be what it was not or what it is not to be. Then it is that man wonders whether all that he sees and senses is real. If these moments persist and man takes advantage of his experience to probe deep into the mystery of his own self, he is said to be a wise man. He only can know his true self. 'Having observed the worlds attainable by actions (to be transient) and that this Uncreated One cannot be obtained by karma a Brāhmana should be dispassionate,' says also the *Muṇḍakopaniṣad.*[1]

Normally, we see that man identifies himself with the body when he says 'I am the son of such and such a person' or that he is black or fair, lame or blind and so on. A vast majority of the populace of the world cannot transcend this body idea. But there are times when man forgets his body also. What does he mean when he says that he is joyous or sorrowful? Is the body feeling that joy? Of course, the body may express it. But where actually is the joy or sorrow? It is in the mind. For the time being, therefore, that person transcends the body. But there is a third experience which cannot be said to be of either the body or the mind—the experience of deep sleep. After awakening from deep sleep the person says 'I slept well. I did not know anything.' Here are two statements—one is sleep and the other is not knowing. The first one shows that the body was restful and the second shows that the mind too was not functioning. But from the statement we come to understand that it is the same person who went to sleep, almost blanked out, that is making the statement and not any other. So we see a third phenomena: a principle that is active, which is beyond even the mind, and watches even when the mind is at rest. That one say our Rishis is the Ātman, the true Self and not this body or the mind. These are its outer coverings. And this Ātman is to be seen, to be heard, to be cogitated and meditated upon,[2] say the Upaniṣads. So here is evidence enough to show that man is not all what he thinks himself to be—not a mere cage of bones and flesh.

II

Having come to the conclusion that our true Self is not the body or the mind a natural desire awakens in man to know what it really is; what its nature is; where in the body it resides; how it can be perceived and so on. It is here that we receive immense help from our Rishis and sages, seers and saints, because they have seen the Reality, known it and out of compassion for us handed down their experiences in the form of their talks, and mantras to posterity.

In the *Kaṭhopaniṣad,* Naciketa asks Yama a very pertinent question, 'There is this doubt among men: Some say that when this body dies there is something that remains, whereas others say this ceases to be. Taught by you I want to know about this knowledge.'[3] This inquiry is the foundation of knowledge. The generality of mankind is satisfied with the things of the world. For them all these inquiries are superfluous. To most of them religion consists in the fulfilment or observance of some dogmas, some rites and following some creeds. And those who are rich enough and have earned wealth by means fair and foul think that they can purchase their place in heaven by building houses of charity and the like. And they believe that is quite sufficient. But very rarely some see through it all and discard them as meaningless, worthless in a greater sense, in the sense of Reality. That is what Naciketa did. Yama offered him long life, chariots, beautiful damsels, heavenly music, immense wealth and vast land. Yet, though a boy, Naciketa replies wisely, 'All these, what you offer,' he says, 'sap the energy of all the senses and even the longest life is but like a dream, very short-lived. Let, therefore, all these be with you alone.'[4] That is discrimination, penetration which helps man to uncover himself. Such a strong determination alone brings us nearer to our goal; makes us comprehend the Reality.

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[1] परीक्ष्य लोकान्कर्मचितान्ब्राह्मणो निर्वेदमायात्
नास्त्यकृतः कृतेन ।
Munda Up. 1-2-13.

[2] आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः श्रोतव्यो मन्तव्यो-
निदिध्यासितव्यः ।

[3] *Katha Upanishad,* 1. 20.

This Ātman is a wonderful thing as the Lord of Death himself testifies. It requires a brilliance of intellect that can illumine the remotest recesses of our heart. Yama in the *Kaṭhopaniṣad* says, 'Wonderful is the preceptor of this knowledge and equally marvellous is the pupil who learns it.'[5] For it is so subtle to grasp and we are so much on the gross side of the world. How subtle it is, is described in another place in the same Upaniṣad thus: 'It is subtler than the subtlest and greater than the greatest and resides in the cavity of the hearts of beings.'[6] It is incomprehensible, yet is the essence of our being. It has been spoken of in contradictory terms such as, 'Though sitting it travels far, though lying down it travels everywhere.'[7] Language fails to describe it, mind fails to grasp it, what it is can be finally said only in negative ways as 'not this', 'not this': 'It is not gross nor subtle; it is neither short nor long; neither red colour nor oiliness; neither shadow nor darkness; neither air nor ether, unattached, neither savour nor odour, without eyes or ears, without the vocal organ or mind, non-luminous, without the vital force or mouth, not a measure, without interior or exterior.'[8] The negative epithets are there to discourage us from imputing any materiality to the Ātman. By denying odour, taste etc. to it the Upaniṣad maintains its unapproachability through the limited senses. Man has but only his five senses to evaluate the things presented to him and when he has to deal with phenomena that transcend his senses he feels himself at sea. That is exactly what happens when man tries to know about the Ātman.

Further, by saying that it is non-luminous the Upaniṣad does not mean to convey to us that the Ātman is dull or dark. Luminosity of a material kind is denied to it. The Ātman is of the nature of consciousness, how can it be dull! 'There the sun does not shine, nor the moon nor the stars, nor the lightning, what then to speak of this mortal fire. Everything else shines in its wake. In its light everything becomes luminous,'[9] say the scriptures. That is what Swami Vivekananda also meant when he said that every soul is potentially divine.

The second conclusion that emerges out of Naciketa's inquiry is that this Ātman is deathless and birthless. By denying these two changes to Ātman, Yama denies to it all the other mutations like growth and decay also. Another Upaniṣad more explicitly puts it as 'It is free from decreptitude, death and fear, and is immortal.'[10]

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[4] *Ibid.*, 1. 26.

[5] *Ibid.*, 2. 7.

[6] अणोरणियान् महतो महीयानात्मस्य जन्तोर्निहितं
गुहायाम् । *Ibid.*, 2. 20.

[7] *Ibid.*, 2. 21.

[8] *Br. Up.*, 3. 8. 8.

[9] न तत्र सूर्यो भाति न चन्द्र तारकं नेमा विद्युतो
भान्ति कुतोऽयमग्निः । तमेवं भान्तमनुभाति सर्वं
तस्य भासा सर्वमिदं विभाति ।

[10] अजरोऽमरोऽमृतोऽभयः । *Br. Up.*, 4. 4. 25.

This idea is well brought out in the Gita by Sri Krishna. When Arjuna out of infatuation for his kith and kin refused to fight them and put forward arguments to abandon his duty as a warrior, Sri Krishna smiles at his ignorance. He remarks, 'You are grieving for those who are not to be grieved for, yet speak like a wise man. But the wise ones grieve not for the living or the dead.' He continues, 'It is not true that you, I and these people were not there before and will cease to exist with the end of these outer frames. For the embodied being birth and death are only two other types of changes as childhood, growth, youth and old age. He, therefore, grievously errs who thinks that he is killing or is being killed. This Ātman is unborn, ever existing, eternal, ancient, and is not killed when the body is killed. This Ātman has not only no death but being immaterial cannot be pierced by the sword, nor burnt by fire, nor drenched by water, nor dried by air. It is all-pervading. It is immovable like a pillar and primordial.'[11] But what it really is can only be subjectively experienced when man transcends all limits, bodily and mental, and attains *nirvikalpasamadhi*.

Sri Ramakrishna many a time attempted to describe what he experienced during his *nirvikalpa samadhi*, — a state where all the accretions of the Ātman are shed away—but thinking about it he would again cross the barriers of this world of ideation and merge into it. At last he said to the devotees, 'I want to communicate to you what my experiences in that state are but something as it were presses down my tongue.' Another time he said it is like going into the inner apartments and shutting the door; anything that transpires inside remains a sealed book for the outside world.

III

The question that next confronts us is that if the Ātman were so subtle as cannot be seen how can we believe in its existence at all. To this Sri Ramakrishna says, well, it may not be perceived by the senses but it can be perceived by the pure mind. Sri Krishna also remarks to Arjuna in the Gita, 'You will not be able to see Me with these eyes of yours, I shall bestow on you ethereal eye-sight to see My divine glory.'[12] The pure mind develops a special faculty to perceive the Divine that dwells in every being. Constant dwelling on the Self, on the Divine is the only way to purify the mind. Sri Ramakrishna used to say, 'If you want to keep your pots and pans bright you have to rub them daily.' This thinking of the Lord is rubbing the mind of all its impurities, making it pure.

Yājñavalkya exhorts Maitreyi in a similar way when he says that Ātman is to be heard, to be cogitated and meditated upon. For, 'this Ātman is a rare thing to hear about in this frenzied world, many have not the opportunity and time to do so. And even among those who hear many do not understand it.'[13] Rare indeed is a person who really hankers after it. Sri Ramakrishna often remarked: 'People shed jugful of tears for wealth, wife and children but where is he who cries for God! Who wants God?' Man is too much absorbed by the world to think of God or Ātman. But for a person who desires God, wants Him, He comes. The lives of sages and saints are the best assurance about this fact, the greatest testimony.

IV

Though the Ātman is pervading the bodies of beings it is conspicuously present at the region of the heart. Sri Ramakrishna compared it to a rich man's drawing-room. 'Though the rich man can be anywhere in the house he is mostly present in his drawing-room. The devotee's heart is God's drawing-room,' said he. Though God is present in every being He manifests more in man and among men also His manifestation is profoundly felt among the pure-souled devotees. Yogis, therefore, think of a blooming lotus in the region of the heart where they meditate upon the resplendent Ātman. The Vedas also speak in a like manner. 'That which is in the lotus-like abode (of the heart) in the city of Brahman is a tiny little space. And that which is in that space is to be investigated, that is to be known.'[14] When this proposition was put forward a natural objection was raised as to what can be there in such a microscopic space. To this the sage answered: 'All that what you see without, the space, the air, the sun, the moon, and the stars and everything that is and that is not, is inside it,' meaning thereby that the very same Being which is the Creator, Maintainer and Destroyer of this cosmos resides or is reflected in the heart of a Yogi, just as even the vast sun is reflected in a tiny dew-drop. That this Ātman is none other than Brahman itself is reiterated in every scripture. Sri Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, 'The Lord, O Arjuna, resides in the region of the heart of all beings. It is He who residing there moves them as if mounted on a machine.' That is why Yogis and other spiritual teachers tell us to visualize a lotus in the heart as the abode or the seat of the Lord, the Ātman. For rationally inclined people this may seem a little odd, but to them we refer to Swamiji's instruction. Alluding to the process of Dharana Swamiji remarks, 'Dharana is holding the mind to certain points. Forcing the mind to feel certain parts of the body. This Dharana is of various sorts, and along with it, it is better to have a little play of imagination. For instance, the mind should be made to think of one point in the heart. That is very difficult, an easier way is to imagine a lotus there. The lotus is full of light, effulgent light.' Imagination does play a great part in our life. We all know this. So instead of dreaming idle dreams is it not infinitely better to see a lotus in the heart and Ātman as manifest there? Therefore, this imagination is quite in keeping with even the most rational thinking. Sri Ramakrishna too recommends the heart as a splendid place for concentration.

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[11] *Gita* II. 11 to 13, 19, 20, 24.

[12] *Gita*, XI. 8.

[13] *Kathopanishad*, 2. 7.

Further, these words Ātman and Brahman are often used interchangingly in the Upaniṣads in order to impress that these two mean one and the same thing. Nay, there is the definite, positive and unambiguous declaration of the Upaniṣads to this effect: 'This Ātman is Brahman who is the experiencer of all.'[15] Sri Ramakrishna too says, 'It is God Himself who plays about as human beings.' From the foregoing evidence both ancient and recent we should have no difficulty to understand the real nature of our true Self, the Ātman.

All that is required is to remember that we are That. Of course, it is not possible to grasp this idea immediately. Even a person like Śwetaketu, brought up in the tradition of the ancient knowledge found it rather hard to understand. His father had to repeat it to him with elaborate explanation not less than nine times before he could comprehend the idea. Further, this knowledge need not necessarily upset the followers of the path of devotion. It is enough for them if they feel an affinity, a kinship to God whom they worship. They may establish any relation with Him — of a child, a servant or a friend whichever agrees with their sentiments. The main purpose of human life being to know one's true Self, to see God, it matters little what path one follows to attain the goal.

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[14] *Ch. Up.* 8. 1. 1.

[15] अयमात्मा ब्रह्म सर्वानुभूः । *Br. Up.*, 2. 5. 19.

WHAT MAKES SENSE IN RELIGION

SWAMI NIKHILANANDA

Religion is nowadays suspect among many people, especially among those intellectuals whose thoughts have been influenced by physical sciences. The scientists give a mechanistic interpretation of the universe and a materialistic explanation of life. The number of these intellectuals may be few. The masses of people do go to church, but many of them do so out of mere habit, or to conform with others. No doubt there are some genuine seekers who attend church services, but with the spread of education, controlled by intellectuals, religious ideas are likely to be gradually undermined.

Why do people repudiate religion ? Why do they suspect religious values ? There are many reasons for it. In the past, religion produced both good and evil effects upon the life of the individual and of society. In the name of religion people have persecuted one another. Hatred, malice, selfishness, religious wars are the evil effects of religion. But clear thinking reveals the fact that the religious teachers, or the prophets, are not the promoters of intolerance and bigotry ; it is when politics and selfishness enter into religion that persecution and evil effects follow. That religion has done much good to society is evident everywhere. Inspired by religious feeling people have shown charity and kindness and been responsible for the promotion of social welfare. One sees everywhere the influence of religion on painting, sculpture, architecture, literature and music.

Today religion is being attacked from many sides. Certain pyscho-analysts, for instance, say God is the projection of our own mind. We worship God as our father because we have the idea that we need a protector, someone to help us in distress. As a child leans upon its father for assistance, so also human beings who have not yet reached above their infantile nature think of God as Father-in-heaven. Other schools have equally fanciful interpretations of God.

The Marxists condemn religion as the opiate of the people. They give the economic interpretation of culture and society. Stalin in Russia started a crusade against religion. It is said that at one time there was a great famine in the Volga region. The dictator went to a church and saw there some valuable church treasures. He asked the priest to part with them to help the people in their distress but the priest refused on the ground of a canon law which forbids any interference with church property. So Stalin confiscated the treasures and repudiated religion.

When I was in Russia in 1962, I went to a monastery and saw there a strange sight. One witnesses similar things in India also. I saw people, mostly women, going to a little shrine with pots in their hands. There is a spring, the water of which falls over a cross. The cross is planted in the spring. The devotees filled their pots with water and left there a few kopeks. A natural spring was there before the founding of the monastery and just to exploit human ignorance a cross was put there by some priests to make the place holy. Some Western critics seem to judge religion from their knowledge of Judaism and Christianity as they are generally practised in churches and synagogues. They know little of the lofty ideals of religion as taught by Christian and Jewish prophets, not to speak of the truths of the Oriental religions.

In order to understand what makes sense in religion we have to know the definition of the word. The etymological meaning of the word *religion* is what " binds a man to God." This generally refers to certain beliefs and dogmas by which men show their loyalty to God. But this is not the Hindu definition of the word *religion*. Swami Vivekananda said that religion is the manifestation of divinity already in man. Every soul, according to Vedanta, is potentially divine. It is the function of religion to bring out this divinity by the discipline of work or worship or psychic control or love or philosophy. The manifestation of divinity already in man is the whole of religion. This is what makes sense in religion. The books, temples, rituals, etc. are all secondary in importance. Religion is a positive something and not a negative nonsense. It is not subjection to groans under oppression but expansion and manifestation. It is not the unquestioning acceptance of dogmas or creeds which are useful under certain conditions. Real religion is being and becoming. It is the constant struggle of the aspiring soul to become divine, to be perfect as our father in heaven is perfect.

Religious experience, according to Vedanta, is the common property of all men and not of a few elect who were born in the past. Religion is realization and not just reading from the books, or reasoning, or listening to sermons. These are mere preparations. Reason creates doubts and cannot give conviction. God and soul cannot be perceived by our sense organs. They are not in heaven nor in the remotest part of outer space. They are within man himself. So the Hindu philosophers say that in order to experience reality one must cover one's eyes, which means one must turn the sense organs within and stifle the restlessness of one's mind. Intellect is useful in practical life. Man also has the power to transcend the intellect and see the Truth face to face as we see an apple lying on the palm of our hand.

The dogmatists identify religion with the scriptures. That does not make much sense about religion. The Vedas say that when the great Truth is revealed in our hearts the Vedas cease to be the Vedas and the seeker transcends the teachings of the scriptures. The holy books cannot help us to control our senses, nor are they of any use in suppressing the restlessness of the mind. The scriptures indicate God but cannot give us direct experience of Him. They tell us what is good and what is evil, what is right and what is wrong; they also tell us what will happen to us if we follow the good and the evil. But the scriptures cannot compel us to pursue the good and avoid the evil. The choice is ours. We are free to pursue the good and to shun the evil.

Now, what does not make sense in religion? Mere talking about God does not make sense in religion. Preoccupation with the scriptures does not make sense in religion.

Then what does make sense in religion? The word *religion* in Hinduism is called *dharma*. One of the scriptures defines *dharma* as that which is conducive to our happiness here on earth and peace hereafter. Dharma supports a man in his present stage of life and also shows him the way to a higher evolution. Dharma covers the whole of life; it determines our conduct. The greatest tragedy of our times is to divorce religion from daily life. Religion vitalizes our physical, our mental and our supramental life. We read in the Hindu scriptures about the *dharma* or religion of the householder, the religion of the king, the religion of the monk and the religion one should follow in an emergency. Here religion particularly emphasizes our conduct and behaviour.

There is a spiritual urge in all creatures, animate and inanimate. According to the Hindu view, the Spirit is the inmost essence of all, though there is a difference in the degree of its manifestation which is conditioned by environment and other physical factors. This physical world is projected by *māyā* or cosmic ignorance, and the Spirit shines through it. The Spirit functions through matter, gross or subtle. The urge of the Spirit to become manifest is irresistible in all created beings, high or low. Swami Vivekananda said that man does not proceed from error to truth but from truth to truth, from truth that is lower to truth that is higher, and that all forms of worship, from the lowest fetishism to the experience of the Absolute, are so many efforts of men to grasp the Divine, each conditioned by his peculiar environment. The urge of Spirit is felt on all levels of creation. Divine Spirit exists in the stones, trees, fire, water, and other physical objects. But the covering of material objects is thick and so the manifestation of Spirit is not tangible.

Then we come to a higher level of evolution, to the animals, birds and insects. Their activities are unconscious. But even these creatures evolve through adaptation to environment, struggle for survival or sexual selection. This shows the presence of spirit or intelligence in them. These lower creatures have their spiritual impulse if one accepts the word *religion* in its broadest sense.

Next is the human level. Here the consciousness, which is instinctive on the subhuman level, becomes self-consciousness. Man alone has the power to reason about good and evil. He can distinguish between right and wrong. He aspires after freedom and happiness but does not always succeed. A man often embraces suffering in the name of happiness and bondage in the name of freedom. But still he is struggling and this struggle cannot stop till the goal is reached. The urge is there though it may be misdirected. Man makes mistakes which are generally called sin. He commits sin because he wants freedom. He rebels against law because law obstructs his freedom. Through mistakes he learns his lessons; he changes the direction of the urge from outward and downward to upward and inward. The *Bhagavad Gita* says, the moment he makes the change he becomes religious. It also says that there cannot be any annihilation of the soul because every soul is an eternal portion of God.

Even the agnostics or atheists who doubt or deny religion have that urge. An honest atheist repudiates religion because he does not find in the church a concept of God big enough to satisfy his heart and intellect. There is an amusing story about Bertrand Russell. During the first World War he was arrested as a pacifist and condemned to one month's imprisonment. The superintendent of the jail asked him about his religion. When Bertrand Russell said that he was an agnostic, the superintendent asked him to spell it. Then the superintendent said : "Well, I don't know. God has created so many religions for devout people ; I suppose agnosticism is also one of them."

At the superhuman level the covering of *māyā* is very thin. The joy one experiences on that level is like the light coming through glass. You see it but cannot touch it. In order to touch the light you must break the glass. At that level the urge of the soul to realize freedom is the strongest. Therefore the devotee practises the higher disciplines, prescribed by all the major religions, such as love, purity, self-control, non-attachment, suppression of the ego, surrender to God, and so forth.

Religion influences all aspects of life ; physical, mental, social and supramental. On the physical level it purifies our body and our senses so that we may use them to realize God. Our body and sense organs must be pure and strong. One of the Vedic invocations says : 'May the different parts of my body, my tongue, my breath, my eyes, my ears, my strength, all be nourished. May we hear with our ears what is auspicious, may we see with our eyes what is good, may we, strong in limbs and body, sing Your praises and enjoy the full life of one hundred years allotted by You.' The body is the foundation, and then comes the practice of religion. The body is the temple of God. The body and sense organs are the channels through which the spiritual experiences become manifest. Therefore the seers of the Vedas prayed for strength and vigour. This is one of the Vedic prayers : 'Power Thou art, give me power ; Might Thou art, give me might ; Strength Thou art, give me strength ; Life Thou art, give me life ; Shield Thou art, shield me ever. May I have voice in my mouth, breath in my nostrils, sight in my eyes, teeth free from yellowness and much strength in my arms.'

The *Bhagavad Gita* condemns mortification or torture of the flesh. Sri Krishna says that those who torture their flesh really torture God in the body. We should have a healthy body, strong organs and a pure mind to control the body and the sense organs, like a charioteer controlling the unruly horses by means of the reins.

At the mental level a devotee practises such disciplines as fearlessness, purity, charity, self-control, uprightness, non-violence, truthfulness, modesty, forgiveness and fortitude. At the social level we are asked to see the solidarity of man. Thus if we injure a person anywhere in the world we really injure ourselves because we all are in essence one. At this level the lower instinct of competition is replaced by the spirit of co-operation. Competition is the law of the jungle. We suppress our greed and selfishness and share with others what we have. It is a sort of enlightened self interest. Politicians and economists today are recognizing the value of co-operation. Take the case of America and its attitude towards Latin America. The 'big stick' policy of Theodore Roosevelt was replaced by the good neighbour policy of Franklin D. Roosevelt. The present administration is following the Kennedy policy of alliance for progress. One reads about the Common Market in Europe. Countries like France, Germany and Italy were formerly competitive in their business transactions. Now six of the European countries have joined the Common Market. Also we hear of the political union envisaged by the Treaty of Rome. They speak of a common political goal of European countries. France and Germany were enemies from the beginning of history. Under Adenaur and DeGaulle they have been co-operating with each other. The Communistic countries also are trying to follow a common political policy, through the Warsaw Pact.

According to the Vedantic ideal such alliances should cover the whole world. Political union or the common market should embrace all the nations of the world. Delegates at the United Nations should be inspired by the Vedic prayer: 'Walk together, speak together, let our minds be all alike; May our purpose be common, common the assembly, common the mind, so be our thoughts united. May our decisions be unanimous; our minds be of one accord. May the thoughts of all be united so that there may be a happy agreement among all. May we help one another; May we assist one another in our tasks. May all be one-minded.' This ideal of social co-operation is based upon the Vedantic principle of oneness of mankind or the solidarity of man.

Then religion at the supramental level takes a new form altogether. It no longer looks outward. It is directed inward. I believe every soul at a certain stage of evolution hears the call of the Infinite, or what the Vaishnavas of India call the 'flute of Krishna'. The soul becomes hungry to commune with God. Everything is left behind, even social service tastes insipid. Patriotism is not enough. The mind is directed from the outer world to the inner world. One practices such disciplines as discrimination between the unreal and the Real, detachment from the unreal, and self-purification through concentration on the Real, and finally absorption in the Real.

Religion must recognize different values. Material happiness is cherished by average men. Śankaracharya says in the introduction to the *Bhagavad Gita* that the Vedic religion prescribes two ideals: material well-being, and the highest good. Worldly prosperity is attained by the practice of righteousness, the earning of wealth, and the enjoyment of legitimate sense pleasures. This is generally speaking, the dharma, and is not outside religion. By righteousness we do not mean just correct behaviour, or politeness or courtesy. Righteousness means directing all our mental faculties towards all that is really good as opposed to what is pleasant. Wealth and sense pleasures must be earned and enjoyed by righteous means, otherwise they become greed and sensuality. After one has enjoyed righteousness, wealth and sense pleasures one pursues the highest ideal which is liberation of the spirit from the bondage of matter. That is called the highest good.

To sum up: Religion operates on two levels; the lower and the higher. The lower level prepares one for the higher level. At the lower level a religious seeker renders social service, studies the scriptures, performs worship, and participates in rituals. But they are externals of religion. They prepare the way for the final attainment of the supreme freedom. The chrysalis is transformed into a butterfly. The chrysalis, an uninteresting creature, absorbs sunlight and air. Something grows inside and one day it breaks the shell and the beautiful butterfly comes out. In like manner the disciplines at the lower levels act like sunlight and air on the aspirant and something grows within; one day the shell of ignorance breaks and man comes out as the illumined saint.

Then what makes true sense in religion? It must lead us ultimately to the highest good. What is the highest good? It is described in the sixth chapter of the *Bhagavad Gita*. The highest good means complete non-attachment to the material world, not indifference. It means serenity in pleasure and pain, in honour and dishonour, in health and disease, and in life and in death. It enables one to remain unmoved by the heaviest sorrow and suffering. As long as we have the human body we must face suffering; but we should remain unperturbed. Sri Ramakrishna used to give the example of the anvil. The anvil continuously gets hammer blows but it remains unmoved. What makes real sense in religion is the inner contentment acquired through knowledge and experience of Reality, which gives one same-sightedness to all: saints and sinners and friends and foes; it is because the same Spirit, the same God, dwells in all. An illumined person sees everybody in himself and himself in everybody. Thus infinite compassion flows from his heart. He is always immersed in bliss resulting from his unceasing contact with Reality. This is what makes sense in religion.

People say nowadays that with the spread of education, science and technology, we shall be able to give up religion which is one of the superstitions. But people cannot give up religion. The Russians under Stalin made the experiment and today religion is a factor in the Russian life. Those who are official members of the Communist party, of course, deny God and religion, but there are only two million Communists among two hundred million Russians. Churches in Russia are filled with people. Some time ago a report was published in the *New York Times* by a board of American Christian ministers who went to Russia to study the religious situation. They attended Sunday services in different churches and said later that religion was a dynamic factor in Russian life today. They found in the churches young and old, boys and girls, participating in the service.

We cannot give up religion. It is our constitutional necessity. Man has a body, and a mind, and he also has a spiritual nature called the soul. The body is maintained by food, the sense organs are gratified by sound, touch, taste, smell and form, the mind is nourished by art, literature, philosophy and the various sciences. But the soul is satisfied only by communion with God.

What is God? He is the Universal or Cosmic Intelligence whose attributes are Truth, Goodness and Beauty. You can call God by any name: Allah, Father-in-heaven, Kali, Krishna or Jehovah. There exists an eternal relationship between the Eternal God and the Eternal Soul. This eternal relationship may be expressed in different ways: such as the relationship between master and servant, or father and child, or mother and child, or friend and friend, or the relationship between lover and the beloved. Some philosophies say it is the relationship of absolute oneness. But the relationship exists. It is not to be created. It is only to be discovered. To be always conscious of this eternal relationship between the eternal God and the eternal Soul, and to apply the knowledge of this relationship to our daily thought, action, and word, and to guide our conduct by Truth, Goodness and Beauty is what makes sense in religion.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA AND INDIAN CULTURE

(Continued from the previous issue)

SWAMI PREMESHANANANDA

XII

Up to the coming of the British on the Indian scene, a lively interest was keenly and fanatically evinced in religion (*dharma*) and liberation (*mokṣa*) among the Brahmanas and the sannyasins; but due to the persecutions of the British no field of activity of the Brahmanas remained to them. Caught under trying circumstances many fit and unfit persons, for the sake of livelihood began to take up the garb of sannyasins. The result has been that the ideal of a Brahmana, i.e. practice of righteousness, and building-up of character, and the ideal of a sannyasin, to renounce the world and strive for emancipation, were lost sight of.

Now a new era of prosperity has begun in the history of mankind. During these fifty years since the Ramakrishna Mission opened the doors of renunciation, of sannyas to one and all, without consideration of caste or creed, we have witnessed the rigid walls of caste crumbling, as also the lessening of sensuality that had penetrated every strata of society. If we think of these effects, of these two reforms we shall without doubt accept Swamiji as the prophet of the modern age.

A question may here arise: Is there not a possibility of lowering the ideal of the Sanatana Dharma due to this liberality in the bestowal of sannyasa? To this we have to reply that in the present circumstances there is no other alternative but to take this risk, if there is any at all. It is like the risk the physician takes when treating a patient to save him from imminent death — he is likely to use such drugs which in the long run may have an adverse effect on the life of the patient, but at that particular critical moment the treatment is necessary to save his life. Similar was the situation in which Swamiji had to prescribe this liberalism. And it still continues to be so. But the world being what it is, a mixture of good and evil, it belies our hope of its ever reaching the state of Satya yuga which Swamiji fondly cherishes. The principle that controls the universe is that when there is elevation at one point there must be a depression somewhere else, like the pans of a balance, a pan going up will in that proportion push down the other. For as Sri Krishna says, all works, in which creation also is included, are covered with defects, with drawbacks, as fire is covered by smoke, — *sarvārambhā hi doṣeṇa dhūmenāgnih ivāvratā.* Yet man has to strive for the ideal.

The political independence has put us in possession of immense possibilities. If only now the enlightened could ponder over the problems facing the country and their solutions as placed before us by Swamiji and follow them up, the nation would certainly regain its healthy tone. From Swamiji's works we come to understand clearly that in the culmination of man's perfection he is all-knowing and omnipotent. If after attaining perfection man passes away from this world he returns to his pristine condition just as an actor discarding robes, that he had worn for the purposes of a drama, assumes his own form and costumes. The actor even during his acting was not any other but he had forgotten himself for the time being. Similarly freedom of the soul is not something that is extraneous. It is already there and man comes to know of it naturally when he had finished his experiences in the world. So what is wanted is to lift ourselves above the impediments that cow us down. And then we know our true being.

Once a young man complained to me that the life in the present set-up of the household in the country had become so deplorable that a person who wanted even to do his daily religious duties, as *sandhya* and prayers had no option but to renounce the household and get away from it. This particular incident opened my eyes as to why Swamiji insisted on liberalisation of the rules for initiating people into *sannyasa*. In the prevailing circumstances in the country it is of primary importance that a high ideal should be held before the people, so that as they travel on the path of truth, their discriminative power will be awakened. And then it is that the individual will be in a position to select for himself the kind of spiritual practice which will suit him best. At the present moment, therefore, the only task before us is to encourage man to strive for his upliftment. That this is the work designed for us can be easily discerned, if we read Swamiji's complete works, especially his letters. By following him, mankind will certainly progress. And whosoever will take shelter under him will receive help from him. For has he not said that he would work for the welfare of all beings even after his passing away?

XIII

In schools teachers present before children a 'model script' and ask them to follow that type of writing, the next work of the teacher is only to remove whatever difficulties the students may find in following the 'model'. But following the one and the same 'model script' a thousand boys learn to write, but not two of their writings are identical. This is nature's design. Likewise, among the monastic disciples of Sri Ramakrishna too, no two were alike, though each one of them undoubtedly passed his life in moulding it according to Sri Ramakrishna's ideal. However, in every one of them we could see two things prominently present: absorption in the thought of the Divine, and earnest effort in the welfare of all beings. Another important trait in the disciples of Sri Ramakrishna, both lay and monastic, was that all of them with firm conviction accepted every religion as true. And their only aim was to see to the well-being of all. These two, absorption in the divine and welfare for all, have been the purpose of every sage, every seer. It is the aim of man's life.

Sri Ramakrishna has set an ideal before us. And we shall know those persons to be the devotees of Sri Ramakrishna who would mould their lives according to his ideal. But to know this ideal in its exactitude and follow it we must have recourse to a preceptor and that preceptor is Swami Vivekananda. Because, without his guidance, every one of us will interpret Sri Ramakrishna's ideas according to our own understanding, colouring it with our past tendencies and that will not be following Sri Ramakrishna at all. Very deep and subtle to understand is Sri Ramakrishna. Let us take one or two instances: Sri Ramakrishna, for the most part of his life, never took food from any but a Brahmin's house. So, it is possible that his devotees, if they have not understood him properly, may think that they should also do the same thing and reject like poison food from persons other than Brahmins, however pure the others might be. A second instance: Sri Ramakrishna did not give the sacramental food (*prasāda*) to anyone other than devotees, therefore it is possible that some of his devotees may constrainedly look down upon all other bhaktas. Again, those who like Swamiji as a liberal thinker may expose themselves to the danger of making their lives a mess by starting to imitate him in this particular point. Having pondered over all this we have come to the conclusion that the way for the modern age is to make Sri Ramakrishna as the ideal and accept Swamiji as his interpreter. To be brief, it will not do to think of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda as two different beings. We have to know Swamiji as the *alter ego* of Sri Ramakrishna and follow him.

(*Concluded*)

ETHICS OF THE SAMKHYA PHILOSOPHY

ANIMA SENGUPTA

The most important feature of the Samkhya ethics is its emphasis on the moral considerations which in its opinion should spring from ontological necessity. It particularly lays stress on the fact that in our moral life, we should be guided by the principle "whatever is real is good". This means that the conception of good must be identified with metaphysical reality, otherwise morality can never be of unquestionable authority. If moral considerations arise from social needs only, then morality becomes relative and conditional. Whatever is good for the society now, may not be good for it after one hundred years. Moreover, duties arising from social needs are of empirical import only, and are, therefore, helpful in social relations.

According to Samkhya, *apavarga* or liberation, arising from discriminative knowledge of the two fundamental principles (*puruṣa* and *prakṛti* falsely united through ignorance) is the real good or *śubha* and it is this *apavarga* that is to be aimed at by man as the *summum bonum* of his life. Samkhya-ethics arises directly from its metaphysics and as such it is necessary to state at the very outset the ontological view of this school.

Samkhya is a dualistic system. It recognises two principles — spirit and matter — which are called soul and body. The nature of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, i.e. spirit and matter and their relationship form the central doctrine of the Samkhya philosophy. The most important point in the Upaniṣads is the doctrine that the inmost self is of the nature of pure consciousness and that it is the ground of all our experiences. The *ātman* is identical with Brahman. The diverse powers of Nature have no reality: it is independent of it. But in the Upaniṣads, an attempt to show how from one reality the empirical world has sprung up is nowhere visible. We are simply told that the universe has originated from Brahman that ultimately it will return to it. The Samkhya doctrine has, however, explained how this world of multiplicity has gradually come into existence through the process of evolution from *prakṛti*. In this glorious act of creation, Nature is supposed to be moved to act through the influence of Spirit. *Puruṣa* or the spiritual reality is of the nature of pure consciousness and is above all impurities of action or passion which are falsely ascribed to it through *avidyā* or ignorance. The relation of the soul with the world is only external or artificial. The productive agent is *prakṛti*. It is unconscious and is a principle of change or becoming. Primal nature is ever undergoing changes into forms and categories, thereby creating this phenomenal world of varied experiences. All experiences of pleasures and pains belong to *prakṛti* and not to the self. It is through ignorance and passion gathered from ceaseless flow of *karma* from beginningless time that we ascribe to the soul all the impurities of our worldly life. The realization of the pure nature of the self and also of its distinction from *prakṛti* is called *viveka-jñāna* or the discriminative knowledge and attainment of this knowledge is the real ethical goal of this ceaseless cycle of births and deaths. So, the real ethical problem for Samkhya is the problem of freedom from pain and its attainment by discriminative knowledge. Bondage is due to action-influences of the past lives done under the spell of ignorance or *avidyā*, whereas liberation results from meditation upon the truth that Spirit and matter are distinct. While discussing Samkhya-ethics, we should make an attempt to understand the Samkhya view on liberation, transmigration and *karma*—the three root concepts of Hindu ethics.

Liberation or Mokṣa

The peculiarity of all philosophical systems of India lies in the fact that they do not seek to satisfy merely the intellectual curiosity of man. Rather, they aim at enlightenment of life and thus hope to help man in his attempt to get rid of the sufferings of the worldly existence. In India, a philosophical system is also called *mokṣa-śāstra* or the science of liberation. The worldly life is a life of misery and pain, desires and frustrations and in spite of the best efforts that a man can put forth, he is unable to secure permanent happiness. Man is, therefore, required to rise above the shifting scenes of this world to attain liberation. The lust for worldly pleasures and profits can be destroyed only by divine knowledge and this divine knowledge is for Samkhya '*viveka-jñāna*' which a man can attain only when he succeeds in realizing the distinction between Self and not-self. No worldly means can remove forever the sufferings of this empirical life. The performances of Vedic sacrifices can remove pain for a short period only and as these actions involve sacrifices of animals, they must ultimately produce pain and not pleasures. The knowledge of science and performance of religious sacrifices cannot, therefore, lead to the final annihilation of sufferings and pains, though these ordinary means have a limited value in making life at least tolerably happy on this earth. The root cause of all our misery is ignorance and non-discrimination between spirit and matter. It is necessary that through discriminatory knowledge, we should form in our *buddhi*, the true conception of the nature of self and then with the help of this saving knowledge, we shall be able to attain liberation from the sorrows and miseries of this world.

This highest knowledge can be attained by us through the purification of *buddhi* or the intellect. Although *buddhi* is predominantly *sāttvika* in nature, yet under ordinary conditions, the *sattva-guṇa* in the intellect remains associated with *tamo-guṇa* and *rajo-guṇa* and for that reason the true nature of self is not visible. When through a long course of spiritual training, *buddhi* gains back its essentially *sāttvika* character, it becomes almost similar to *puruṣa* in purity and transparence. In that purified condition of the *buddhi* is reflected the true nature of the spiritual principle and so the *buddhi* feels itself to be different and unrelated to the pure and transcendental soul, as a result of which ignorance of the *jīva* is totally destroyed. Under such circumstances, Nature turns its back on the liberated *puruṣa* and ceases its activity of binding such a self to this life of worldly existence. It should, however, be remembered that with the attainment of release by a single *puruṣa, prakṛti* does not cease to function. There are other *puruṣas* to be liberated and Nature goes on working in her own way for the release of those bound selves. The released *puruṣa* perceives Nature, but is no longer deluded by her powers of creation. Both *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* are eternally real. The world is not false. It is real and concrete and living. What is false is the seeming identity between Spirit and matter. If this sense of identity is transcended, the *puruṣa* attains liberation and such liberation can be brought about by right knowledge which is also a *dharma* of *buddhi*. Thus we find that according to Samkhya, *prakṛti* creates bondage and at the same time has in itself the secret of emancipation. The inherent teleology of Nature produces the world for the experience of the self and again it has a tendency to recoil within itself, setting the *puruṣa* free. Liberation, therefore, is the natural end of the whole process of creation and is not something external. *Prakṛti* works not merely for the enjoyment of the Spirit, but also for his emancipation. Bondage and liberation therefore are the two purposes for which the process of evolution starts.

Bondage and Karma

Following the Upaniṣadic traditions Samkhya also believes that bondage is due to *Karma*. It is the *buddhi* in its impure state that leads us to perform action and thereby creates a snare of repeated existence for our own selves. The impressions of our past actions done under the influence of greed and passions lie inherent in *buddhi* as its modifications and the inherent teleology of *buddhi* is such that these impressions are transmigrated with *buddhi* from birth to birth and the lives of the individuals are formed accordingly. Each vicious action brings suffering and a virtuous action pleasures. It is the action of the present life that determines the kind of life that one is going to have in one's future existence. When actions are excellent or extremely bad, they may bear fruits even in this very life. It is only when a man is able to attain true knowledge that he can rise above bondage and can have a taste of the life-eternal that knows no suffering or pain.

Re-birth and Transmigration

Closely connected with the doctrine of *karma* is the doctrine of rebirth and the process of transmigration. According to Samkhya, the soul is eternal and indestructible and it has neither birth nor death. What we mean by death is only the dissolution of the material body. Nothing happens to the self during this process of dissolution. The question, therefore, arises what becomes of the soul when a particular body — its special case — is destroyed? The answer is : it gets a new body and a new existence according to its *Karma.* Since the soul is all-pervading and does not admit of any change of place, it does not move from one life to another. What transmigrates is not the self but the subtle body consisting of the eleven organs of sense together with *buddhi, ahamkara* and the five rudimentary elements. This subtle body is a relatively permanent addition to each *puruṣa* which leaves it only when it attains release. In the beginning of creation a subtle body was created for each particular self. So long as the self will remain in bondage, the subtle body will not leave it and the gross body will repeatedly get attached to it. The influences of our past actions are stored up in the subtle body and through it are carried from birth to birth and go on blossoming forth into new enjoyments and new modes of action. This subtle body is not visible to ordinary human beings. It can be seen only by the *yogis* or the sages who have attained perfection. It is only when the intellect is purified by the acquisition of moral merit that the self is able to escape from this subtle material encasement which also means for it an escape from the realm of pain.

Thus, the Samkhya says that ethical life is confined to empirical sphere only when the tragic confusion between Spirit and matter exists. The Samkhya Kārikā says : 'No *puruṣa* is bound or liberated, nor does any migrate. It is *prakṛti* in its manifold forms that is bound, is liberated and migrates.'

Conclusion

The ethical position of Samkhya, if studied carefully, will reveal some facts which are of great moral value.

Samkhya believes in the inviolable law of *Karma* that creates and sustains the empirical existence of man and his worldly affairs. Truly speaking, the law of *Karma* is a law of psycho-biological development of living beings. Growth, development and psychological progress of life in different spheres of existence are fully controlled and determined by this law. Our actions are the dynamic manifestations of our psychological dispositions and physical energy. The kind of action that a man chooses to perform is limited and determined by his own psychical make-up, character or personality of this life is the result of psychic dispositions of *the previous life and there is thus a continuous psychical inheritance.* What a man thinks, feels and wills is, therefore, of very great importance for himself as well as for the whole cosmos. It is by his own thoughts, feelings and emotions that an individual determines his own nature, existence and environment in this life, as well as in the next. Man is self-created and this act of self-creation by one's own will and action continues till liberation and an individual goes around the cycle of births and deaths over and over again. He is liberated only when he attains discriminative knowledge and get out of the sphere where the law of *karma* operates. Purification of intellect or the psychical apparatus is, therefore, regarded in Samkhya as the most essential step towards attainment of peace and perfection. Even in this scientific age we cannot deny the fact that psychological change is no less important for creating a superior generation than changes in the material world. In fact, ever-lasting happiness of man or his permanent peace, whether here or hereafter, consists not in the possessions of this world, but in the possession of the soul. It is only the change in the psychical being of man that can save him from utter destruction and total annihilation. Possession of wealth and power and victory over the enemy are not enough to help man develop his true spiritual manhood. The whole career of man must be a preparation for the attainment of some end which is above acquisition of wealth and power and gratification of desires and various other baser passions of his animal being. Man is not flesh only : he is also a spirit. While indicating the idea of a full and perfect life, a philosopher must take into account all these elements of human nature without doing violence to any one of them.

The present age is an age of confusion and dismay. Some of us are sceptics, some are materialists and dialecticians and again some are dogmatists and staunch followers of orthodox religion. In such speculative chaos our vision is blinded by controversies and argumentations which unfortunately lead us nowhere. Materialism teaches that our mental life is subjected to the same mechanical causation that determines the phenomena of the physical world. But if our life is determined merely by physico-chemical laws then freedom becomes an illusion and the denial of human freedom is a death blow to all ideals and values of life. The world is created to enable man to realize all the values embedded in his own self. The Samkhya teaches that the world is not something to be despised or ignored. It is real and significant as without its support, man will never be able to have a full taste of the life eternal. The Samkhya philosophy has tried to do justice both to matter and spirit. It has shown that it is only by living in this material world and practising *dharma* that one can rise above the phenomenal existence and can realize his own self which is his true being. The creation of the universe from a material stuff is not meaningless and mechanical. It is thoroughly teleological. Nature engages herself in creative acts to become the object of enjoyment of spirit and also to liberate it from torments and tortures that trouble life and hamper spiritual progress. Although Nature is so much perfected in Samkhya that it can explain the whole universe even without receiving any influence from spirit, still we find that Samkhya has not developed into a purely materialistic philosophy. This seems to be due to the fact that these thinkers were fully aware of the importance and reality of Spirit. They did realize that without the recognition of *puruṣa*, meaning and values of life would remain unexplained. Man would then be no better than a machine, guided purely by mechanical laws. So, Samkhya, after recognizing eternal matter, has also recognized the supremacy of eternal spirit thereby making an attempt to form a bridge between the two opposite creeds of Materialism and Idealism.

For a detailed study of the Samkhya Philosophy please refer to the author's comprehensive work, *The evolution of Samkhya School of Thought.*

The Sankhya Philosophy of Kapila was the first rational system that the world ever saw. Every metaphysician in the world must pay homage to him. I want to impress on your mind that we are bound to listen to him as the great father of philosophy. . . . How wonderful his perceptions were, and if there is any proof required of the extraordinary power of the perception of Yogis, such men are the proof. They had no microscopes or telescopes. Yet how fine their perception was, how perfect and wonderful their analysis of things !

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

THE GREAT EQUATION

(Continued from the previous issue)

S. K. GUPTA

Aaruni : Let me narrate the story of a traveller from Gandhara. His route lies through dense forests infested by ferocious wild beasts. Gangs of marauders prowl about in that lonely track. The Gandharian is waylaid, blindfolded and robbed. The robbers tie up his hands and feet and drop him in a solitary place. He loses all sense of direction and of the lie of the land. The poor man cries in agony 'Help ! Help ! I am from Gandhara. I have been thrown here bound and blindfolded by robbers. Free me from bondage.' A kind-hearted passerby goes up to him, extricates him, indicates the directions to him and asks him to go north. If the man is clever, he will find his way back home asking people he meets *en route*. On the contrary if he is stupid, he will fumble about and never reach home. The poor man is in an awful plight. Away from his home, robbed, tied and blindfolded, he has lost his bearings and is dying of hunger and thirst, terrified all the time of being mauled or devoured by wild animals. He is frantically shouting for being helped out of his predicament, till the generous person comes, frees him and shows him his way back. It is through the kind assistance of this Good Samaritan that he gets back home in joy. Our plight is no less. Away from our blissful existence in Reality, we have been cast into this forest of material body, constituted of energy, water and earth, the material structures assumed by 'Sat'. Like the forest it abounds in dirt and filth, like bile and catarrh, blood and bone, flesh and marrow, wind and worms, suet and semen, stool and urine. Nor does it lack in the terrors of the jungle. We live in dread of eternal conflicts of heat and cold, pain and pleasure. Blinded by ignorance, we are barred from True Vision. Trammelled by possessiveness and desire, we thirst for wives, children, friends, cattle, wealth and a thousand and one objects. Virtue and vice, flowing from our own work, have robbed us of our blissful nativity and thrown us into our mortal frames. Like the Gandharian in bonds, we exclaim, 'I am so and so's son, these are my relatives and friends, I enjoy, I grieve, I am learned, I am stupid, my son is dead, my riches are lost, I am sunk, how shall I live, what is my future, what is my relief,' and so on and so forth. We bemoan our misery in a thousand and one such egotistic exclamations, till in our partial virtue we chance upon a kind and competent preceptor, who has realized Reality, redeemed himself and is integrated, in tune with the Infinite. In his loving kindness, the Guru tells us that we are not just individuated phenomenal egos. The egoistic limitations of pleasure and pain, birth and community, virtue and vice do not belong to us essentially, nor do we belong to them. In essence we are Reality Itself, the conditions of phenomenal existence are just foists. Thus he removes the veil of ignorance that covers us. Convinced of the flaws of this phenomenal existence and assured of our pristine dignity, we renounce the sordid ways of the world in disdain, and establish ourselves firmly in Truth, in Reality, in Brahman. Just as the sensible Gandharian reaches home assisted by a generous guide, we find our source in Reality with the kind help of our Guru. He only knows Truth who is privileged to be taught by a competent Guru. Liberated in life, we enjoy authentic existence. Owing to the impetus of our past thoughts and deeds, the physical existence, however, continues, till the momentum of Karma, the Vasana-complex exhausts itself and we cease to be. It is then that we are completely united with Reality. There is no time-lag between physical annihilation and spiritual union. The limited consciousness of the ego is lost in Universal Consciousness, never to return.

Śwetaketu : Father, liberation in life through realization of Truth, authentic existence *pari passu* phenomenal existence, poses a difficult problem. There must be a considerable volume of good work (karma), done in this as well as in previous lives, which may not yet have started to bear fruit, prior to realization. In the post-realization state too, there will be performance of further work prescribed by the Scriptures. This heavy potential of work must needs fruition and therefore re-embodiment after death becomes inescapable. The fresh body also will be the source and ground of further activity which would in turn demand fruition and so on *ad infinitum*. Physical works thus seem to be more potent than spiritual knowledge, in fact wisdom becomes infructuous since the dynamics of Karma pursues life inexorably. To say that True Knowledge obviates work would imply a synchronisation of wisdom and death. Such an eventuality would produce a famine of competent Gurus — for nobody would live to teach. The only way out of this difficulty would be to hold that Spiritual Knowledge is only for a special purpose and not all-embracing, like the Gandharian's knowledge of his way back home. In other words there is nothing like authentic existence, and phenomenal existences are unavoidably real. Vedantic lore only sublimates them.

Aaruni : No ; unfulfilled works do not fructify after Unitive Knowledge is attained. The seer unites with Reality simultaneously with death.

Śwetaketu : But surely the saying that virtuous deeds produce virtue cannot be erroneous.

Aaruni : No it is not. There is, however, a difference between work in the process of fruition and that which is not. The former is like a flying arrow which falls to the ground with the loss of its momentum, as the initial impulse spends itself. It has no further use or potency after it hits the target. When the Karmic process responsible for the seer's present embodiment exhausts itself, his body has no further use and ceases to be, and the seer is united with the Real. All other works, performed prior to attainment of knowledge, either in this life or in others, previous to this, which still lie dormant, burn themselves out in the flame of knowledge. It is like atonement of sins. It has been said that the fire of knowledge reduces all Karma to ashes. Post-enlightenment works performed by a sage bear no fruit, are innocuous. Therefore, although the seer of Truth has no use for life, its current flows till the Karma which produced it exhausts itself, just as the arrow falls to the ground as the impelling force is spent. Enlightenment neutralises human behaviour. Therefore Śwetaketu your real entity is that Subtle Essence, Truth — Thou Art That.

Śwetaketu : What is the process, sir, by which the knowledgeable disciple unites with 'Sat' through instructions from his preceptor ?

Aaruni : Physical process of dissolution is the same as in case of death. I have already described how in case of death speech loses itself in mind, mind in life, life in energy and energy in its ultimate source, Reality. The aspirant to release passes through the same process. The view that the vital air of an aspirant blows out through the cerebral cortex and its ego reaches Reality through the solar path is completely incorrect. Motion implies a destination, duration and impulsion. Unitive Knowledge dispels all these diversities of Time, Space and Causality. In that monistic state, differences and relations have no place. That is why it has been said, 'Impulses and desires of the person who has realized Self peter out in this life.' That is the difference between the ignorant and the enlightened. The former carry their load of dispositions, the psychic residues of their idea and will, while their egos unite in 'Sat', while the latter just merge in 'Sat' — free and untrammelled, just as the waters of numerous rivers lose themselves in the expanse of the ocean. That is the reason why the ignorant return to the world of appearances, while the seers with the lamp of true Knowledge lighted by the lessons of Scriptures and instructions by their Gurus completely merge themselves in 'Sat' never to return. They become One with Reality never to suffer from strife and conflict of the many.

Now you surely see why I said 'Thou Art That'. For essentially that Subtle Principle is the only entity, the only Truth, all the rest are mutations, phenomenal and impermanent.

Śwetaketu : A last question father — seeing that post-mortem union with Reality is the same for the ignorant as well as for the enlightened, how is it that the ignorant are reborn and the enlightened are not? How can there be difference in products when the process is the same.

Aaruni : A person is indicted on a charge of theft. He pleads not guilty. The judge asks him to pick up a hot axe. If he is speaking the truth his palm will not be burnt, but if he is not it will not only be burnt but he will go to the gallows as a punishment. It is adherence to truth that makes all the difference. Love of truth insulates the palm of the innocent person while falsehood has no defence.

Similarly, though the ignorant and the enlightened unite in Reality after death, because of their attachment to false values of the phenomenal world of mutations the ignorant return and assume forms suited to their psychic tones, while the enlightened fortified in their vision of Truth never deflect from the Unitive Existence — in fact they lose themselves in Reality. The determinants of release and bondage are respectively the Knowledge of Truth and the lack of it. I hope it is clear to you now, Śwetaketu, that this Truth, this Essence, is the Source, Support and Spread of the Universe. It is the core of all beings and is Itself uncaused and imperishable. It is the Unitary Principle of Bliss and Beauty, devoid of Fear. Therefore do I say Śwetaketu *Thou Art That.*

Śwetaketu : The mantle of darkness is lifted father — I know my Self now. So long I identified it with this physical ensemble of body, mind and senses, born out of your loins and known as Śwetaketu. Now I know that the entity which in its conceit of erudition plied you with questions and having listened to your answers, reflected on them and finally knew that Truth is essentially the Conscious Principle, the Ultimate Reality. It is that Principle which activises mind by Its image to fulfil Its Idea and Will to multiply. All my egocentric thinking and behaviour were due to an inborn misconception. The mind was so conditioned as to apprehend non-Truth as Truth, the variable as constant, the ephemeral as permanent. We saw things with a slant. Truth cries out to be known — It is in everything but the mists shroud It. Now the mists have cleared. I see Light, father, I see Light.

(*Concluded*)

This very soul therefore is the Self in man. There is only one Purusha, the Brahman of the Vedanta ; God and man, are one in It. The universe is you yourself, the unbroken you ; you are throughout the universe. 'In all hands you work, through all mouths you eat, through all nostrils you breathe, through all minds you think.' The whole universe is you ; the universe is your body ; you are the universe both formed and unformed. You are the soul of the universe, and its body also. You are God, you are the angels, you are man, you are the animals, you are the plants, you are the minerals, you are everything ; the manifestation of everything is you. Whatever exists is you. You are the Infinite.

—SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

PHILOSOPHICAL DISPUTATION IN THE COURT OF EMPEROR JANAKA

M. K. VENKATARAMA IYER

The six chapters of the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad fall into three divisions known as the Madhukāṇḍa, Yājñavalkya kāṇḍa and Khila kāṇḍa, each kāṇḍa comprising two chapters. There is continuity of teaching in the three kāṇḍas. The unity of the Self which is taught in the Madhukāṇḍa chiefly on the authority of Śruti texts is reinforced by means of arguments based on reason in the Yājñavalkya kāṇḍa. Certain meditations, specially that on the mystic syllable 'Om', which are conducive to the realization of the unity of the Self are taught in the Khila kāṇḍa. It is so called because it *supplements* the teaching of the two previous divisions.

Yājñavalkya plays the leading role in chapters III and IV and hence the name Yājñavalkya kāṇḍa. In these chapters we find that he is both an intrepid debater and a persuasive and impressive teacher. He shows himself to be a past master in the art of employing argument to score victory over his opponents and also to discover and establish the truth. The former type of argument is what Indian logicians call *jalpa* and the latter *vāda*. In his instruction to Emperor Janaka[1] we see that *vāda* takes the form of what western logicians call the method of *transcendental regress*. It consists in digging into the foundations of experience till one lights upon the ultimate rock of certitude. By merciless analysis and elimination, Yājñavalkya shows that the Ātman which is pure sentience is both the Highest Truth and the Highest Value.

In the philosophical disputation which takes place in the court of Emperor Janaka, of which a full account is given in Chapter III, Yājñavalkya shows himself to be a brilliant dialectician who can employ the type of argument known as *jalpa* to effectively silence his opponents. The occasion for the debate is created by Emperor Janaka himself. On one occasion he was performing a great sacrifice and had invited to it all the well-known scholars of the time, not only from his kingdom but also from the neighbouring kingdoms of Kuru and Pāncāla. Being a scholar himself and also greatly interested in listening to learned discussions, he adopted a device to start a debate. He ordered that a thousand cows should be brought and put in a pen. To the horns of each cow a gold piece of ten *pādas* was to be attached to make the prize more attractive. Then he proclaimed: 'Revered Brahmins, let him who is the best Vedic scholar among you drive these cows home.'[2] Every one was naturally eager to annex the prize to himself but no one had the courage to come forward. If any one did so, the others would not keep quiet. They will want him to establish his superior scholarship before driving the cattle home. They will put searching questions to him, and, if he failed to answer them, he will be publicly put to shame. Hence there was a pause. Breaking the silence, Yājñavalkya boldly came forward and said, 'Dear Samasravas, please drive these cows home.' The other scholars felt that they were slighted. They got angry and said: 'How dare you call yourself the best Vedic scholar among us?' Yājñavalkya coolly replied: 'I bow to the best Vedic scholar; I just want the cows.' That was the signal for a volley of questions to be addressed to him by the assembled scholars. Since a sacrifice was just then in progress, Aśwala, the chief officiating priest, was the first to interrogate and, of course, the question related to the place of

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[1] See the present writer's articles on this subject in *Vedanta Kesari* for March, June and November, 1963.

[2] Swami Madhavananda's Translation of the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad and Sri Sankara's commentary thereon is adopted throughout this paper.

Vedic rites in the scheme of Vedantic discipline.

Vedic rites may be very ordinary ones like the daily Agnihotra or very important ones like the Aśwamedha meant for special occasions. They presuppose the collection of many ingredients and the spending of money on a liberal scale. They are to be performed by people who are qualified for them at fixed times and with a meticulous eye to the details when they happen to be of an elaborate nature. The object in performing them with so much care is to gain either earthly ends or heavenly pleasure. They are thus actuated by desire (*kāmya*). Since the aim is to secure pleasure for one's private self they are selfish in nature. Desire for the objects that are supposed to be outside of us and the thirst for the pleasures arising from their enjoyment are at the back of our minds when we undertake the performance of these rites. Desire is the outcome of foundational ignorance which is spoken of as Death. Aśwala wishes to know how the sacrificer can overcome this Death: 'Since the performance of rites is overtaken by Death and swayed by it, by what means does the sacrificer go beyond the clutches of Death?' In the same strain he puts two more questions seeking to know how the sacrificer can go beyond time. His fourth question relates to the manner by which the sacrificer can obtain the rewards of the rites. He addresses some more questions bearing on a special variety of rites known as *sampat*. These consist in meditating on an inferior rite as if it were a superior one. The meditation is based on certain resemblances between the two, real or fanciful.

Yājñavalkya's answer to these questions is that the sacrificer can overcome Death only by rising above desire and selfishness that are implicit in the performance of rites. Limitations arising from attachment to the body and the gross elements can be overcome only by meditating on their divine or cosmic aspect. As a first step in this direction, we must realize that our sense-organs are not confined to the body but have deities presiding over them. These are known as the *adhiṣṭhātri devatās*. Fire, for example, is the deity who presides over our vocal organ, Sun over the organ of sight, the Quarters over the organs of hearing, Air over the *olfactory* sense, the Moon over the mind and so forth. In fact, our sense-organs derive their strength from these deities. Owing to our ignorance we imagine that they are exclusively attached to our bodies and function in their own right. To overcome this ignorance Yājñavalkya recommends meditation on the divine aspect of these organs. By meditating, for instance, on the eye as the Sun or the mind as the Moon, the sacrificer becomes identified with these deities and, as a consequence, goes beyond time. There is no day and night for the man who is identified with the Sun; similarly the division of time based on the waxing and the waning of the Moon carries no meaning to the man who, by constant meditation, has become one with the Moon. Liberation from the limitations of time is a definite step towards final emancipation.

The next question is by Ārtabhāga. His question is the logical outcome of the previous one. In answer to Aśwala's question, it was made out that what is called Death is only another name for primeval ignorance, that it gives rise to desire which, in turn, leads to the performance of rites. Desire implies objects of enjoyment and the sense-organs to which they appeal. Colour, for example, appeals to the eye, sound to the ear, smell to the nose, taste to the tongue and so forth. The sense-organs are here called *grahas* because they receive the impression. The objects which have a powerful hold on the sense-organs are termed *atigrahas*. Yājñavalkya mentions eight *grahas* and eight corresponding *atigrahas*. In addition to the well-known five sense-organs he includes the vocal organ, the hands and the mind in the list of *grahas*. He goes on to add that Death in the form of these *grahas* and *atigrahas* can be overcome by another Death. This latter is the saving knowledge which will dispel ignorance. For the man who has attained the knowledge of the unitive Self there is no further rebirth. He attains Brahman here and now. After physical death he does not have to go anywhere. While he is alive, he is the *Jīvanmukta*.

But the man who dies without such knowledge has to be born again and again to work out the stock of his accumulated *Karma*. At the time of his death, the deities presiding over the sense-organs are deposited in their cosmic or divine counterparts such as Fire, Air, Sun and Moon. When the man is reborn owing to the residue of *Karma* these presiding deities come back to their proper places and enable the organs to start functioning. Thus the *grahas* again come under the grip of the *atigrahas*. Desire for the objects arises as a consequence and to gratify it man engages in actions, secular and religious. The more we satisfy these desires the more they multiply and there is no end to them. Caught in this vicious circle, our ignorance deepens. The only remedy is to go through the discipline of performing rites in a selfless manner combining meditation with them. This will result in partial liberation. Final emancipation will come with the acquisition of the knowledge of the true Self. All varieties of Karma will become powerless in the wake of that knowledge.

Bhujyu, the third questioner, wants to know the reward for him who performs the highest kind of rite, the Aśwamedha. Yājñavalkya's answer is that the sacrificer attains identity with Hiranyagarbha. This consummation is the highest reward for the performance of Vedic rites even in combination with meditation. But this is not to be confounded with final emancipation. Mokṣa is simply the realization of the true nature of one's real self. It is an ever-present reality and there is no need to attain it or produce it. It is not, therefore, an end to be brought by suitable means. Rites are acts intended to produce definite results. They have therefore nothing to do with Mokṣa which is beyond seeking and finding, beyond pursuit and attainment. Śri Śankara has taken occasion in this context to enter into a full discussion of the place of rites and meditation in the scheme of Vedantic discipline. His conclusion is that these are only indirect aids to Mokṣa and never a direct means. They can purify the mind of its agelong impurities and make it fit for receiving the highest knowledge which will come as a *vritti*. This is all that rites and meditation can do. What hides our true nature from us is ignorance. It can be removed only by knowledge and not by rites. The performer of Aśwamedha sacrifice can hope to attain identity with Hiranyagarbha but not final emancipation.

Uṣasta, the son of Chakra, is the next to interrogate Yājñavalkya. His question directly arises from the answer given to the previous one. There has been mention of man's true self. Uṣasta wishes to know about Brahman which is immediate and direct and the Ātman which is within all beings. Yājñavalkya points to the finite self which regulates the purely physiological and psychological functions in the human body. It is known to everyone and no one can deny it. It is therefore immediate and direct and is also within all beings. But Yājñavalkya adds, it is free from hunger and thirst, grief and delusion, decay and death. At this point, the answer becomes somewhat intriguing. Kahola, the next questioner, is therefore provoked to repeat the same question : He says : 'Tell me about the Brahman which is immediate and direct and also about the Ātman which is within all beings.' The point of his question is whether there are two selves or only one. *Prima facie* it looks as if there are two selves — one immediate and direct and the other within all beings. By using the words *yourself* in his answer to both questions Yājñavalkya makes it clear that there is only one self and that is the Supreme Self. It is as is well-known, beyond hunger and thirst, grief and delusion, decay and death. Owing to the limiting adjuncts arising from ignorance, it appears as the jīva and also as Īśvara. Stripped of their limiting adjuncts both Īśvara and jīva will lose their individuality and merge in Brahman. The jīva, being no other than Brahman, there is no harm in transposing the attributes. In the two questions the attributes, 'immediate and direct' and 'being within all' have been deliberately transposed possibly with the object of creating some confusion in the mind of Yājñavalkya. But he is too astute to be taken in. He points to the transposition and says there is no harm in doing so since the jīva is in essence the same as Brahman.

The important point to note is that when new ideas make their impact on the old ones, the resulting knowledge is not merely the old plus the new. It is not a mere mechanical addition from without or even supplementation. What emerges as the result of the impact is something wholly new. The finite self is known to all. It is therefore immediate and direct. We know also that there is an entity called Brahman which creates, sustains and destroys the world. It is therefore within all beings. By a bold sweep of constructive imagination, Yājñavalkya proceeds to identify the two. The identification makes both the entities undergo a sea-change. In the result, they appear in a new complexion altogether. The finite self sheds the limitation natural to it and emerges as the Infinite Self; Brahman is no longer regarded as something external and therefore open to doubt. It is not to be treated as only a fit object for worship like the Sun. It becomes identical with the inner Self of man and hence absolutely certain. Here we have a remarkable instance of the unity of the Self being taught indirectly.

One who has risen to this realization renounces all kinds of desire because he knows that the Ātman is the highest value. He does not desire sons or wealth or the worlds. He does not marry nor does he perform Vedic rites. He removes even his holy thread for there is no further need for it. He becomes a religious mendicant and lives by begging. He is a Sannyasin of the highest order, a Paramahamsa Parivrajaka. In his commentary on this section Śri Śankara discusses the need for complete renunciation as a precondition for attaining the unitive knowledge of the Self. The renunciation must be complete and without any reservations whatsoever. Even the holy thread must be removed.

The next to enter the lists is a lady by name Gārgi, the daughter of Vāchaknu. She figures twice. Her first question is about the reality which remains when all the worlds are eliminated. It is clear that this question as also the three that are to follow arise from what Yājñavalkya has said about the unity of the Self. In answer to Gārgi he makes out that the worlds are arranged in an ascending order of subtlety. Just as water is more subtle than earth, even so the world of the Gandharvas is more subtle than the world of human beings. What is subtle is more pervasive than what is gross. The former is therefore the cause and the latter the effect. The cause can exist independently of the effect but not the reverse. We can therefore imagine the ultimate cause, Hiranyagarbha, remaining intact though all the other worlds have been eliminated.

Though Hiranyagarbha is the most subtle one and consequently most unlimited and pervasive, we cannot resist the feeling that it is also an effect and hence, it must point to an ultimate cause. Yājñavalkya points out that reason and inference find their limit at the stage of Hiranyagarbha and that to find out the source of the latter we must fall back upon Śruti. It means that Brahman which, according to the scriptures, is the substratum of the whole order of creation, does not belong to the series. There is no continuity between the worlds and their ultimate cause. It follows that they are less real than Brahman which is, therefore, the sole Reality. All the rest is automatically eliminated. From the Earth upto Hiranyagarbha it is a continuous series based on the causal relation. What comes after Hiranyagarbha belongs to a different order of reality and hence to be learnt only from Śruti. Yājñavalkya warns his lady interlocutor that it is dangerous to push reasoning beyond its proper limits. The Highest Reality is never an object in relation to a subject. Hence it cannot be known in the way in which we know other things.

Uddālaka, son of Aruṇa, is the next to take the field. He feels that he can easily confound his opponent by means of the knowledge that he has derived from supernatural sources. He has learnt about the Sūtra which holds together this life and the next one from a Gandharva. Does Yājñavalkya pretend to know this? In the absence of such knowledge how can he order the cattle to be driven to his home? But to his utter surprise, Yājñavalkya declared that the Sūtra is *Vāyu* or the subtle body which connects this life with the next one. It is made up of seventeen constituents. In its individual aspect it is known as the *sūkṣma śarīra* and in its collective aspect as the *Sūtrātman.*

His subsequent question is a corollary from this. It is about the Internal Ruler who resides in the earth and the other elements as also in the sense organs and organs of action. Though the Internal Ruler is within all beings it is not to be identified with any of them for they do not know it. Yājñavalkya draws out the implications of this statement. Since the Internal Ruler inhabits the earth and other elements without having a body of His own, it follows that His mere presence accounts for their orderly working as also of the physiological functions in the human body. The Internal Ruler must therefore be Īśvara as understood in the Vedanta system. But Yājñavalkya does not stop here. He goes on to add that though the Internal Ruler resides in all beings, He remains unknown. He cannot be seen or otherwise perceived. He is not an object who can be known by perception or inference. But since He is the power behind the sense-organs and the mind, we must admit that He is pure sentience who lights up all our perceptions. He is the standing Witness of all the states of consciousness. Hence He is not to be identified even with Īśvara. The Internal Ruler, like the jīva, is a mere appearance of the Nirguṇa Brahman, arising out of limiting adjuncts which are illusory.

Desiring to have a second round with Yājñavalkya Gārgi sought the permission of the assembled scholars to address two more questions to her opponent. Getting their assent she proclaimed that, like a fierce warrior, she proposed to put two questions which would surely bring down her opponent. Her first question relates to the Principle which pervades the Sūtra already referred to. Yājñavalkya's answer is that the Unmanifested Ether or Īśvara is the Principle which pervades the Sūtra. It is above the Heaven and below the Earth; it is also between them in the interspace; it was, it is, it will be. The Sūtra is Hiranyagarbha while the Unmanifested Ether is Īśvara.

Her second question is about the Principle which pervades the Unmanifested Ether. Her object in putting this second question is to drive her opponent to a tight corner. If he answered it he would be guilty of the very offence with which he charged her on a previous occasion — viz., trying to reason about what is supra-rational. If he did not answer it, his defeat would become obvious. But, being a shrewd man, Yājñavalkya avoided the trap. He answered the question, not in terms of reason, but on the strength of revealed authority. According to Scripture the Ultimate Principle which pervades the Unmanifested Ether is the Acosmic Absolute. It is neither a substance nor an attribute, neither cause nor effect, neither one nor many. It is wholly unclassifiable, being *sui generis.* It can be defined only in a negative manner as 'not this', 'not this'. It is here that he gives his famous negative definition of Brahman: 'It is neither gross nor minute, neither short nor long, neither redness (fire) nor moisture (water), neither shadow nor darkness, neither air nor ether, unattached, neither savour nor odour, without eyes or ears, without the vocal organ or mind, non-luminous, without the vital force or mouth, not a measure, without interior or exterior. It does not eat anything nor is it eaten by anybody.'

To prevent the impression that, bereft of all attributes, the Absolute is hardly distinguishable from pure nothing, Yājñavalkya proceeds to state that under the mighty rule of this Immutable Brahman, Sun and Moon discharge their allotted functions, Earth and Heaven keep to their courses. Time runs in an orderly manner and that some rivers flow due east while others flow due west. Uniformity in the behaviour of Nature is thus ultimately traceable to this Immutable Brahman. Moral order, like the physical, is also to be attributed to the mighty rule of the same Absolute. Performing any number of rites without the knowledge of the Supreme condemns man to transmigration while he who has realized the identity of his own inner Self with the Transcendent Absolute is never again reborn. It is beyond perception and inference, being the constant witness of all our experiences. It is pure sentience which stands self-revealed. Needless to add that Gārgi was struck dumb-founded. She advised the remaining scholars to keep their peace and take their exit with good grace.

In spite of this warning one Vidagdha, son of Shakala, came forward to have his bout with the sage. He was the last to cross swords with the redoubtable Yājñavalkya. He first asked about the number of gods. Yājñavalkya began with a large number and gradually reduced it to One which he called the Vital Force (Prāṇa). In answer to further questions, the sage made out that this Prāṇa assumes many forms to serve as suitable supports for worship and meditation. What particular form it assumes will depend on the caste, temperament and intellectual calibre of the worshipper. By such worship and meditation the worshippers attain identity with the god of their choice and later with Hiranyagarbha. But that is the highest limit to which worship and meditation will carry them. Only the knowledge of the Unconditioned Brahman will bring final emancipation. Vidagdha neither had this knowledge nor was he eager to acquire it. He was conceited and arrogant. For the sin of showing disrespect to a true Brahman-Knower he had to pay a heavy price. His head fell off and even his bones did not reach his home.

Coming out victorious from the disputation, Yājñavalkya challenged the assembled scholars to put further questions to him if they chose. As no one came forward, he wanted to know if he could put questions to them. There was no answer. Then he gave a brilliant summing up of what had been said so far. He began by comparing man to a tree. There are several points in common to them. Man's hair corresponds to the leaves of the tree and his skin to its outer bark. Just as blood flows from man's skin, sap flows from the bark of the tree. His flesh is its inner bark and his nerves the innermost layer of bark. Man's bones are deep down, so also the wood of the tree. His marrow is comparable to the pith of the tree. If a tree is cut down, it springs again from its roots. Man, who resembles the tree in so many respects, must resemble it in a further respect also. After death he must rise up from some source. It cannot be the seed for it does not originate in the dead man. Even the tree will not spring up again if it is pulled out by the roots. But both man and tree must rise again in the interests of the moral order of the universe. Else there will be no scope for justice to run its course. The Karma of individuals will have to be worked out. For evil Karma men will have to pay the penalty by taking rebirth as dogs and pigs, as plants and trees, as bush and bramble. For meritorious Karma they will have to be born as human beings and even as gods to reap their rewards. The field for rebirth, therefore, covers a wide range, from Brahma down to a clump of grass (*Brahmādi stambha paryantam*). The world-order will therefore have to be kept going. Though men and trees perish, they must rise up again. What is the ultimate source of the origin of the world-order? Yājñavalkya answers by saying that it is the Supreme Brahman. It is the substratum which provides the basis for the repeated appearance of the world. It is therefore the ultimate guarantor of moral values. Its nature is Knowledge and Bliss. Neither of them are its attributes. Towards the close of the chapter Śri Śankara discusses whether knowledge and bliss are to be looked upon as attributes of Brahman or as its very nature. He comes to the conclusion that they are its very essence. As knowledge, Brahman is Pure Sentience and, as bliss, it is one without a second. There is neither anything outside of it nor are there internal differences within it. Due to the absence of any kind of tension it is bliss all-compact. The knowers of Brahman merge in this ultimate and supreme Bliss.

HINDUISM AND CHRISTIANITY TEACH THE SAME THINGS

RABINDRAKUMAR SIDDHANTA SASTREE

It is interesting to note that, there are a lot of teachings in the Holy Bible which to a great extent are akin to those enjoined in the sacred books of the Hindus. It is a historical fact that most of the sacred books of the Hindus were composed long before the advent of Jesus Christ.

Truth is regarded as truth and falsehood as falsehood irrespective of time or place. Fire is hot and ice is cold everywhere at all times. Different prophets of different countries therefore may realize the same truth at different times, and teach their disciples the same things in their own particular modes and languages.

I like to show the resemblances of the teachings of the aforesaid two great religions, with a hope that, the Hindus and the Christians may come to a closer relation, which according to my consideration is urgently needed in these days of atomic and nuclear apprehensions.

That there are close resemblances between the teachings of the aforesaid two different religions will be evident from the following quotations. If all the similar teachings are to be shown, a big volume has to be written. In the present article I shall quote only a few of the innumerable similar teachings. Let me start with the Holy Bible.

In the Gospel of St. Mathew, we find the following teachings :*

1. Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. (4. 4).

2. Ye have heard that it was said — An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth; but I say unto you, that ye resist not evil; but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. (5. 38-39).

3. Ye have heard that, it was said — Thou shalt love thine neighbour and hate thine enemy; but I say unto you — Love your enemies and pray for them that persecute you. (5. 43-44).

4. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thine inner chamber, and having shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret, and thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee. (6. 6).

5. (Prayer to God) — And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. (6. 13).

6. For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. (6. 14).

7. Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not ye of much more value than they? (6. 26).

8. Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you. (7. 6).

9. Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruits ye shall know them. (7. 15-16).

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* Some of these quotations may not be verbatim but their sense has been retained—*Ed.*

10. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. (7. 18).

11. Every one therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. (10. 32-33).

12. He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. (10. 37-38).

13. Therefore I say unto you — Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto man; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. (12. 31).

14. Honour thy father and thy mother; and he that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. (15. 4).

15. And Jesus said — Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness. Honour thy father and thy mother, and thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. (19. 18-19).

16. And every one that hath forsaken houses or brethren. or sisters or father or mother or children, or lands for my name's sake, shall receive an hundred-fold and shall inherit everlasting life. (19. 29).

17. Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (5. 3).

18. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. (5. 4).

19. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. (5. 5).

20. Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. (5. 6).

21. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. (5. 7).

22. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. (5. 8).

23. Blessed are they that have been persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. (5. 10).

24. Blessed are ye when men shall reproach you, and persecute you, and say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. (5. 11).

The following teachings of the different sacred books of the Hindus may be compared with the above respectively.

1. Eating, sleeping, fear and mating — these are common in man and animal. The special characteristic of human beings is that, they have a feeling of righteousness. In the absence of righteousness men are no more than beasts. (Mahābhāratam).

'āhāra-nidrā-bhaya-maithunaṇca sāmānyametat paśubhirnarāṇām.
dharmo hi teṣāmadhiko viśeṣo, dharmeṇa hīnāh paśubhih samānāḥ.'

2. Even when ill-treated, one should not give pain to the mind of anybody, nor should one think of any action that may cause harm to others. One should not utter even a single word that may cause displeasure to anybody; because, such a word would act as a bar to his attaining heaven. (Manu-samhitā 2/161).

3. Those who love their friends and foe alike, and mix with both of them for rendering friendly services, will surely attain heaven. (Mahābhārata, Anuśāsanaparva, 144/34).

4. For performing daily obligatory meditation, one should enter a forest fully self-restrained. There he should sit by water and repeatedly recall the *Sāvitrī* incantation. (Manu-Samhitā, 2/104).

5. Greed is the source of anger. It causes hankering after this or that. Misconception, destruction and sin — all spring from greed. (Mahābhāratam).

'lobhāt krodho prabhavati, lobho janayate tṛṣām.
lobhanmohaśca nāśaśca, lobhah pāpasya kāraṇam.'

6. O king, it is forgiveness which makes one well-established. It also restrains one from harsh action. (Śāntiparva, 163/8).

7. Building of a house brings sorrow. It never brings bliss. Behold, snakes dwell happily in the houses built by others. (Bhāgavatam, 11th Skandha).

8. Never should this (the teachings of the Gita) be told to one who is devoid of austeri-

ties, nor to one who is not a devotee, nor to one who does not wish to hear it, nor to one who cavils at Me. (Gita 18.67).

9. One should keep aloof from a false friend that speaks sweet words in his presence, but spoils his interest behind him. Such a friend is comparable with a jar full of poison having merely a layer of milk at the top. (Mahābhāratam).

'parokṣe kāryahantāram pratyakṣe priyavādinam
varjayet tādṛśam mitram viṣakumbham payomukham.'

10. Father himself is born in the form of his son. (Virāṭaparvan).

'ātmā vai jāyate putrah.'

Cause and effect are not different from each other. *'kāryakāraṇayorabhedah.'*

11. When a man thinks of God, He also thinks of men. Out of this mutual thinking real good comes unto men. (Gītā, 3/11).

12. Give up all your worldly duties and come unto me, your redeemer. I shall purify you of all your sins. You need not lament. (Gītā, 18/66).

13. Atheism, censure of the Vedas and that of saints, malice, lethargy, pride, anger and rudeness are to be given up. (Manu, 4/163).

14. As a result of devotion to mother man attains this world. By devotion to his father he attains the upper world and by devotion to his spiritual guide he attains the world of the Supreme Spirit. (Manu, 2/233).

So long as the above three are alive, one should do nothing else than engage oneself in services that are good and pleasing to them. (Manu, 2/235).

15. Non-violence, truth, refraining from anger and persecution, patience and simplicity are surely the signs of righteousness. (Mahābhāratam, Anushāsanparvan, 22/19).

Killing of a Brahman, drinking of wine, stealing, adultery and company of those who commit any one of the above crimes are enumerated as great sins (*mahāpātakam*). (Manu, 11/53).

Killing of a cow, performance of sacrifices at the instance of an out-caste, adultery, selling of self and giving up of one's spiritual guide, father, mother or children or even of his Vedic studies or obligatory sacrificial fire are enumerated as serious sins (*upapatakam*). (Manu, 11/58).

16. It is righteousness alone which accompanies one even after one's death. All other things perish with the body. (Manu, 8/17).

17. A poor person sleeps and rises without any anxiety. Poverty therefore in this world is a cause for happiness, cure and good. It is as beneficial as approved diet to a patient. (Śāntiparva, 176/7).

18. A sinner may be purified by public confession of his sin; as well as by repentence, austerity or study of sacred books, and under adverse circumstances even by simple donation. (Manu, 11/226).

19. A king should prosper by conquering his enemies without war. (Mahābhāratam, Śāntiparva, 94/1).

20. Follow the path of righteousness. Nothing is better than righteousness. Kings who walk in the path of righteousness are able to conquer this world. (Śāntiparva, 92/6).

21. It is clemency that removes envy, anger and greed from one's mind. This clemency in its turn arises out of a sense of renunciation. (Śāntiparva, 163/9).

22. Having controlled all the different senses along with the mind, one should perform all his duties without torturing his body through austerities. (Manu, 2/100).

23. It is better to die for the sake of righteousness, than to obtain victory through sinful acts. (Śāntiparva, 95/17).

He who sacrifices his own life for protection of a Brahmin, a cow, a woman or even of a minor boy or girl, attains salvation, even if he be an out-caste. (Manu, 10/62).

24. A Brahmin should not covet honour as he does not covet poison. He should ever desire dishonour as he desires nectar. (Manu, 2/162).

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

'When the bandage was removed and the bone was completely set, one day the Master came to Ahiritola to witness the Puja performed by the local public. While coming in a carriage he saw some women on the streets; they were dressed finely and were waiting at their doors. Casting his eyes on them, he could only say, "Mother, you have dressed yourself so nicely," and he was off in deep *samadhi*. Those who were in the carriage never saw him passing into trances. They thought he had an attack of epilepsy and went on crying for me in a loud voice. They asked the driver to stop the carriage. It took him quite a time to come out of the trance. Then the carriage started again.

'Another incident — it was about Bhupatibabu (Bhupati Charan Chatterji). When he came to Dakshineswar the Master was anointing oil and making ready for bath. He came and sang a song. (Another devotee gave us two lines of this song, which we give here.) "Who is as good a ferryman as Hari (the Lord)? He ferries us across the ocean on the boat of his two lotus feet." The Master passed into *samadhi* and in that state placed his foot on Bhupati's shoulders and said, "Take it, take it." '

Now we are coming to a topic about whose date we are not sure. Our guess is, it might have occurred in 1884. The Master was returning from Calcutta to Dakshineswar. Inside the carriage were seated the Master and Ramalalda and at the top by the side of the driver was sitting Lātu Maharaj. When the carriage was passing through Cossipore the Master said to Lātu to ask the driver to stop the carriage. When it stopped he told Ramalalda, that he was extremely hungry. 'Have you got some money?' said he, 'then go and purchase some *kachauri* with the flavour of asaphoetida from Phagu's shop.' Ramalalda went for the purchase and Lātu went to a bush for a couple of minutes. At any rate their absence would not be for more than five minutes. When they returned they did not find the Master in or near the carriage. Both of them started in search of him. In a short time Ramalalda saw him walking away with vigorous strides, quite unconscious of anything. Lātu Maharaj narrated to us what he had heard from Ramalalda.

'Ramalalda went on calling him at the top of his voice but the Master heard him not and strode on. At last Ramalalda started running to catch him. He caught him and said, "Where are you going? Come home." The Master appeared not to have recognized Ramalalda, and looked puzzled. Then Ramalalda, as if to bring him to his old memory, said, "Did you not ask me to buy hot *kachauri* from Phagu's shop? And where are you going now? Won't you take hot *kachauri*?" It is only then that he returned to the carriage. Since this incident one or other of us would always be with him. Never did we leave him alone.'

That year, after the Durga Puja was over we played *golokdham* * at Dakshineswar. At the first throw Lātu got seven and reached goloka at once. Lātu was overjoyed to such an extent and made so much noise that the Master appeared there, and highly pleased at Lātu's joy, asked him not to play again that day.

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* On a piece of paper are printed in separate squares most of the Hindu places of pilgrimage with some pictures thereof, and some mythological places, good and bad including heavens and hells, as well as brothels, bars etc. Each player's piece is moved from 'house' to 'house' as the number of tiny shells in the throw of seven of them show their bellies up; e.g. if three show the piece moves to the next third house. But in most of the houses it is written if a piece moves into it, it will go either up or down, to another house; or if when there, the player's throw indicates three, or four the piece will move down or up to another house. Thus each piece goes on moving up or down till at last it reaches *goloka*, the highest Vaishnava heaven. If a piece once goes to the 'house' of hell it cannot come out unless the player throws 'one' which is quite unusual. If however at the very first throw of a player all the shells show their bellies he at once goes to goloka—he is the first to win the play.

'One day, we were accompanying the Master to Calcutta; when the carriage was passing through Cossipore the Master saw, in a bar, some people drinking and singing. Seeing this he passed into a trance and was about to get down. Placing one foot on the foot-board he became unsteady like a drunkard. At this two people were going to catch him. I told them not to do that and added that he would himself be steady and normal and would enter the carriage again. He is under the safe protection of one who never fails to do the needful under any circumstances. They heard me and the Master got into the carriage. You know when a man is in trance or *samadhi*, impure persons should not touch his body, if they do, he feels excruciating pain. We saw it many times in the Master.

'Look here. The Master would take us to the theatre. There Girish Babu used to regard him with great respect. He used to pay a rupee and Girish would reserve a box for him, big enough to seat three or four persons. Girish would, moreover, engage a man to fan the Master. Girish Babu used to come upstairs, to meet and talk with him. Once it happened like this. Girish was tipsy. He implored the Master to be reborn as his son, so that he could serve him most intimately. "In this life, I could not serve you. Promise you will fulfil my desire to serve you as my son. You must promise." The Master said, "What a request? Why should I be your son? How virtuous was my father!" This angered Girish Babu who, under the influence of liquor, went on abusing him right and left. I also lost temper at that and was about to raise my thick stick when Deven Babu forbade me to do that. Said he, "When the Master himself is bearing it all why should you get irritated?" I stopped, but I was beside myself in anger and had I not thus been prevented I would have beaten Girish Babu that day. When we were returning to Dakshineswar in a carriage Deven Babu told the Master what I was about to do. At that the Master turned to me and said, "Were you going to do that my boy? To lay hand on Girish's body! Did you not notice that even after such a barrage of abuses he fell flat on the ground in obeisance when we were returning? Can you find on earth a man of faith as great as he?" I heard him again and again imploring Mother, in Girish's behalf, not to take offence at Girish's behaviour. "He is but an actor in a theatre, what will he know, Mother, of your glory!"

'When other devotees heard of this incident all naturally got annoyed and asked the Master not to go to him again. Rama Babu too heard it. Next day he came to Dakshineswar. The Master immediately narrated the incident and asked for his opinion on the matter. Rama Babu said, "Revered Sir, the mythical serpent Kāliya told Sri Krishna, 'My Lord, you have given me poison, where shall I get nectar to offer to you?' Girish Babu is exactly in that predicament. Where will he get nectar, Sir? Why should you be annoyed with him?" Hearing Rama, the Master said, "So Rama, let us go to him even now in your carriage." At once the Master, accompanied by myself, Rama Babu and two other devotees, started for Girish's house. Here Girish Babu was seized with remorse, day and night he had cried and cried, he had taken no food. When he heard in the evening that the Master had come, he ran downstairs shedding tears, and prostrated at his feet and would not get up. At the repeated request of the Master he got up and went on babbling for some time. Then I heard Girish Babu say, "If today you had not come, my Lord, I would have understood that you were not yet above praise or blame, that you were not worthy of being called a Paramahamsa, that you were only one of us, cheating people under the name of a Paramahamsa. Today have I understood without the shadow of doubt that you are no other but That. No more will you be able to by-pass me. No more will I leave you. Now, this very moment, do I take refuge in you. Do tell me, you have accepted me, you have given me salvation."

'Even after this incident the Master went to Girish's theatre, and that along with us. One night they were staging *Daśamahavidya*. (This play was named later as *Dakshayajna*.) The moment Girish Babu, acting his part said, "I will no longer keep on earth the trace of the name of Śiva," the Master cried out "What does the rogue say? (Turning to a devotee seated near) What's your opinion? We must not hear such things. Is this the education he is imparting to the public?" These words of the Master reached Girish's ears. He came in the dress in which he was acting the part and requested the Master to hear a little more, just a little. The Master repeated, "What trash you have written, 'I will not allow Shiva's name to be taken on earth?'" Girish said, "This is to pander to the public taste." The Master stayed on a few minutes.

'I have heard of another incident taking place in the same theatre. One night when the play was over Girish took the Master to the dressing room. Girish asked all the actresses (who were all prostitutes — during those days none but they were available for acting female parts) to take the dust of his feet, adding "Do take it. All your sins will be washed off." When they were about to touch his feet the Master said, "If you do it from a distance that also will do." But they would not hear. Some of them did touch his feet. Returning to Dakshineswár he told us, "Hello! my feet are burning." Hearing this Ramalalda brought Ganges water and washed his feet with it. Then the burning sensation abated. He could not bear the touch of impure persons.

'Once some Marwari devotees invited him on the occasion of the *Annakuta*. (I do not know the date.) Master took us also there. It was, that year, a big thing. There was such a concourse of men, women and children that when we finished our lunch it was five p.m. Then the Master took Ramababu and two other persons in the carriage and drove to Dakshineswar. It was the Dewali night. That part of the town was brightly illuminated. He asked Ramababu to purchase a *chillum* worth one pice.†

'A woman devotee came one day and said to the Holy Mother, "I am very poor, I cannot afford always to bring something for the Master. Today I have prepared some sweets for him and brought it here. Will you kindly take them, to him?" Mother said, "He has already finished his lunch. He does not take anything after that. Why, my daughter, have you brought it so late?" This set the lady weeping. Soon after the Master came there with unsteady steps, merged in *bhavasamadhi*, took the things from the devotee's hands, partook a little of it and gave the rest back to her. He then turned to me and said, "Henceforth, my boy, whatever things are brought for me should be taken first to Nahabathkhana, i.e. to Holy Mother and then distributed among the devotees." A devotee asked, "Maharaj, why did the Master make such a rule?" Lātu Maharaj: Why? It is because during his illness all kinds of people used to come to him. Many of them were not pure, nor did they give presents without motives. It happened like this. I gave something to him during his lunch. He at once cried out, "Whose is this thing? Uh! that fellow's — he is a miser to the marrow. He has sent this with the motive that his son be cured." Saying this he threw the thing out of his dish. Such turned out to be daily occurrences. He used to send all things to Holy Mother so that their bad effects could be obviated by her touch or look.

'Once it so happened that there was swelling in his legs. He was still at Dakshineswar. Mahendra Kaviraj asked him to take lemons. Brother Yogen used to bring two fresh lemons everyday. Master would take them daily. But one day he could not take them. Yogen was astonished. On enquiry it was found that from that day the garden had been leased out to another man for a year. As the Master was given to truth he could not take the lemons that day, for the permission to take the fruits had been obtained not from the new lessee but from the old owner, who, after the leasing out, had no right over the fruits.'

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† *Note*: The Master was of opinion that persons bring their products and manufactures to a fair for sale and show, and that people who could afford should purchase something by way of encouraging the producers.

In this connexion Lātu Maharaj narrated another incident, which we give below :

'One day the Master saw a ripe mango fallen under a mango tree of the garden. He could not pick it up. He told one of us, "Hellow! there is a mango there, why don't you pick it up and give it over to the manager?" The manager, however, did not take it, he asked the man who brought it to him to eat it.

'On the occasion of the Master's last birthday celebration at Dakshineswar during his lifetime Narottama sang *kirtana* there. There was quite a crowd then; about 250/300 devotees took prasada that day. That day, when the Master touched Loren babu he (Master) passed into *samadhi*. Since that time there was a division among the devotees of the Master. In one party there were Rama, Girish, Manomohana, Kedar and others. They used to call the Master an Incarnation of God. In the other group were Balaram, Kishori, Suresh, Pranakrishna and others. It was on this occasion the Master made it known to the devotees that Māyā was no other than Īśwara Himself. "The creatures and creation are but He. Jivas are His manifestations. Avataras also are His manifestations but with a difference. But ultimately all are He, all are one... The same one who Incarnated as Rama and Krishna has Incarnated this time (showing himself) as Ramakrishna."

'One day he paid a visit to Girish's residence. That day he had a long conversation with Girish's brother, Atul babu. There during the meal he gave curds to Loren babu from his own dish.

'After the death of Loren babu's father the family had to undergo terrible privations. At last they wanted to arrange for his marriage which would fetch a handsome dowry. Hearing this the Master took me with him and drove to Loren's house. Loren babu said, "I was going out but saw you coming, by the Tala turn, so I did not go out." The Master asked, "How did you see us?" Naren explained it. You know, if a man is engaged in sincere *sadhana* many occult powers, such as telepathy, television come to him. Loren babu saw us in that way. Hearing him patiently the Master quietly said, "You should not express these things to others. This is only the beginning. Many more things will come, but keep them all to yourself." The Master took him into the carriage and brought him to Dakshineswar. Among other things the Master said, "Mother brought you down here for me. Marriage is not for you. You can't marry." Loren babu said, "I can no longer see their miseries — mother, brothers, and sisters are in the terrible throes of penury. I cannot bear it any more." The Master said, "Did you not go to Mother for this? But you could not ask for the removal of their miseries, instead you asked for discrimination, dispassion, devotion and all that. Tell me what I can do. Any way Mother will see that your family will not suffer from want of bare necessities." The moment these words came out of the Master's lips Loren babu said, "Then I will never marry. Take it from me." "What do you say, my boy?" said the Master, "Mother has shown you to me in the guise of a *sadhu*. Can it ever turn out to be false?"' A devotee hearing this, told Lātu Maharaj, "But maharaj, we have heard that Narendranath was brought here on our earth from the region of the unmanifest, that he was a part of Rishi Nara. And we have read that a light travelled all the way from heavens to Calcutta and Narendra was born of it. Never did we hear that the Master saw him in the guise of a *sadhu*."

Lātu Maharaj said, "Once in Keshav babu's house Narendra was playing the part of a *sadhu* in a theatrical performance. When he appeared in that dress the Master stood up in his seat and observed him closely and said, "How wonderful! How precisely do they tally!" He went on calling Loren babu out by name. Loren babu was unwilling to come out in that dress. But Keshav babu said, "When he is calling you what harm is there if you come down?" When Loren babu came near, the Master caught hold of his hand and gleefully said, "One day Mother showed you in this dress. How exactly does that tally with this appearance of yours!"'

Hearing this a devotee said, "Maharaj, you speak so many things about the Master which we do not find written in any book."

Lātu Maharaj said, "Bah! Do you think like that? Can all things he said be ever put in writing? The Master's moods were infinite. Infinite are his utterances in those moments. Is it ever possible for anyone to record them all? The few that one heard and understood have been put in black and white. In fact there is no end to his utterances. There was a never-ending flow of words gushing out of his mouth. Take for example the case of Lord God. From time immemorial devotees without number have been saying wonderful things about Him. Have they been able to describe Him even to their satisfaction? Similar is the case with our Master."

A few more things about Narendra that we heard from Lātu Maharaj we narrate below. We are not sure about their dates. We simply narrate them here.

'One day — will you believe? — they were cooking meat at Dakshineswar. The Master came there presently and asked them what they were doing. When they said, they were preparing a mutton curry for Narendra, he said nothing and went away. 'Do you know what the Master used to say about brother Loren? He would say, "Naren will have to be engaged in tremendous activities. Let him take good food, otherwise how will he be able to cope with the works that are waiting for him?... In him the fire of *jñāna* (Knowledge of Brahman) is ablaze. Whatever he will take he will digest; nothing will harm him." It is for this reason that whatever his Marwari devotees would bring he used to give to Narendra.... One day Loren said to the Master, "I am no believer in a God who would be pleased with meat and wine and would be angry if they are not offered." (The reference is to Mother Kali). The Master said, "Today you are not honouring Her, but mind you, there will come a day when you will pay your homage to Her. All the miseries that you are suffering from are due to your not accepting the Mother, Śakti." A day did come when Loren babu accepted Mother. The Master was beside himself with joy when he heard that Loren had accepted Mother. Would you believe, the Master after Loren babu's acceptance of Mother, prayed to Her for the welfare of Naren's family?'

(*To be continued*)

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Swami Nikhilananda is the Head of the Ramakrishna-Vivekananda Center, New York. An author of many books his articles have also appeared in the *Vedanta Kesari*.

Swami Premeshananda's article "Swami Vivekananda and Indian culture" is the last instalment of the series.

Dr Anima Sen Gupta is Reader in Philosophy, Patna University. In her article "Ethics of the Samkhya Philosophy" she succinctly but forcefully brings out the basis of ethics in the Samkhya system.

"The Great Equation" by Sri S. K. Gupta is the concluding instalment of the series.

Prof. M. K. Venkatrama Iyer is retired Professor of Philosophy, Annamalai University. He has been a regular contributor to the *Vedanta Kesari*.

Prof. Rabindra Kumar Siddhantasastree is the Head of the Department of Sanskrit, Maharaj Bir Bikram College, Agartala, Tripura (West Bengal).

AN ASSESSMENT OF OUR SOCIAL DRIFT

The affluent West has become to many impoverished and materially backward countries an example to be followed blind-fold. There is a thoughtless and ridiculous imitation of the West, in all its social customs and manners, going on in our country too. Aping the West, is probably the proper word for it. For little do we think about the cultural set-up in the two hemispheres. Each nation has an individual culture of its own, especially India has something to contribute to the well-being of the whole world, viz., spirituality. And spirituality requires a proper atmosphere to thrive and grow. Our social institutions, we must remember, were formed after great deliberation by eminent thinkers. There may be flaws in them, that is inevitable, for perfection in this world is an impossibility. Flaws and evils are there in every society. The question will be what is best, for our creative thinking, as well as cultural and moral development. Again, compared to the West ours is a more ancient and more experienced culture. Our social laws and institutions have been tried and tested. They have an indigenous background which has sustained India for millenniums in spite of the vicissitudes and calamities, such as alien invasions, it had to pass through. India has held on because the central core of its life, the majority of people, were unimpaired, though there were some deflections in the educated of the society.

But with the glamour of materialism penetrating the majority, a craze to imitate the West not only in material uplift but also in the method of living and social institutions has enormously and frighteningly increased in our land. Even thinkers of the West have noticed this trend with great alarm. For some of them feel that a cultural rethinking in the West must be done and that very urgently. This has led them to turn their eyes to the East specially to India where they find a more stable form of society. An American educationist Dr James B. Klee, a visiting lecturer in Psychology at the Allahabad University recently in a talk on 'Cultural Explosion' at a seminar on student personnel services in Trivandrum warned, 'The Indian family structure was very different at present. "Yet if you westernised your ways you may be similarly disrupted." ' *

Will the present generation heed this warning? For a blind imitation is not only ridiculous but dangerous as well. Nothing is absolutely wrong, as some people make out, with our social institutions. A little reflection and education on the proper lines can easily reinforce the structure which is as yet sound. Not only it is good for India but if properly and rightly construed and acted upon, the institutions can well stand as a model for others to follow or at least to take its strong points. And this is more important today than anything else. Let, therefore the younger generation think and act wisely. Let it not be carried away on the wings of emotionalism, and excitements.

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* Reported in *The Hindu*, dated February 15. 1964.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

SWAMI BRAHMANANDA IN PICTURES (Birth Centenary Souvenir): Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, Belur Math P.O., Howrah Dist. Pp. 100. Price Rs. 10.

Swami Brahmananda, the first President of the Ramakrishna Math, was one of the most beloved disciples of Sri Ramakrishna. Sri Ramakrishna used to regard him as his spiritual son. Rakhal Chandra Gosh, as he was known in his premonastic days, was born on January 21, 1863. Coming to Calcutta from his village for further studies, he met Narendranath and a close friendship grew between them. Their meeting with the Master bound them closer together for life. Each inspired confidence in the other. The Master too helped them to understand each other.

Swamiji had heard Sri Ramakrishna say that Rakhal had the capacity to rule a kingdom. This he remembered when the organization took shape and therefore made over the responsibility of its administration to Swami Brahmananda, which he carried on till he passed away in 1922.

The present Souvenir brought out in commemoration of the birth centenary of the Swami carries a brief life sketch by Mr. Christopher Isherwood and his life arranged chronologically in pictures. The pictures bring to one's memory the place he was born, his association with Sri Ramakrishna, his wanderings and tapasya in the different places of pilgrimage, the establishment of the monastery at Belur and the Swamiji in different moods.

Printed on art paper the Souvenir is excellently brought out and is a prize possession for all devotees of Sri Ramakrishna.

VOICE OF TAYUMANAVAR: By Shuddhananda Bharati. (Pp. 136. Price Rs. 2.00. Shuddhananda Library, Madras-30.)

Amongst Tamil mystics, Saint Tayumanavar occupies a primal place and his songs had been, so to say, the staple food of many a spiritual aspirant. He was a great apostle of Vedanta with a definite *Advaitic* bent, having had the privilege of contacting Sri Sadasiva Brahmendra in his life time (p. 11).

This book gives an epitome of the life and achievements of the great sage; and many of his well-known and classical pieces have been rendered into English verse. These possess, as the author rightly claims, 'eternal value in world literature', elevating human life towards Divine transcendence.

S. RAJAGOPALAN.

THE YOGA VASISHTHA RAMAYANA, VOL. I: By D. N. Bose. Pub.: Oriental Pub. Co., 11-D, Arpuli Lane, Calcutta-12. Price Rs. 10.00.

VALMIKI MAHA RAMAYANA: By S. V. Ganapati, 9-D, Edward Elliott's Road, Madras-4. Price Rs. 4.50.

As a popular text on Adwaita philosophy, the Yoga Vasishtha has few rivals in Sanskrit literature. Purporting to be the instruction given by Sage Vasishtha to Sri Rama on an occasion when his impressionable young mind was overcome by a sense of futility of the world, the narration spreads over to nearly thirty thousand verses of philosophy, yoga, religion, history, romance and cosmogony. Of late, abridged versions have been appearing in English, following the indefatigable efforts of Dr Atreya in this field, and we have pleasure in welcoming these two books, the first of which covers the first three Parts of the treatise and the second covers the last, the Sixth Part.

The First Prakarana (*Vairagya*) describes the requirements for setting out on a spiritual career, especially the need of distaste for things of the world. The Second, Mumukshu Prakarana, deals with the ways and means of orienting one's mind and life in the sole direction of the Supreme Truth. The Third, Utpatti Prakarana, dwells on the origin and nature of the universe. The Fourth, Sthiti Prakarana, discusses the position of the individual in the creation and the Fifth, Upasama, lays down the discipline to disengage the individual from the entanglement of the senses. The last, Nirvana Prakarana, dwells on the progress of the aspirant towards the dissolution of the ego-knots and his immergence in Brahman.

Both Sri Bose and Sri Ganapati have followed the wise course of eliminating repetitions, descriptions and other paddings so as to keep the attention of the reader focussed on the main subject. The books are well got-up and we look forward for the remaining portions to appear soon.

M. P. PANDIT.

RAMANUJA'S TEACHINGS IN HIS OWN WORDS: By M. Yamunacharya. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay-7. Pp. 160. Price Rs. 2.50.

It is difficult to say whether Acharyas like Sankara and Ramanuja have been fortunate or otherwise in their disciple-commentators who have sought to make the original teachings better understood through their dissertations. Be that as it may, there is nothing like a study of the Masters at first hand and the *Bhavan* is to be thanked for making available brief works of this type giving the Teaching in the words of the Acharyas themselves. The present issue deals with Ramanuja and his philosophy, written by Prof. Yamunacharya who has taken pains to select portions from the extensive writings of the saint-scholar so as to cover the Nature of Pramana, Nature of Brahman, Nature of Jagat, Nature of the Jiva, Nature of Hita and Nature of Purushartha. The writer has added an excellent account of the life of Ramanuja and a section on his philosophy and theology before giving the extracts along with his renderings and notes.

The book is a dependable introduction to the subject.

M. P. PANDIT.

BENGALI

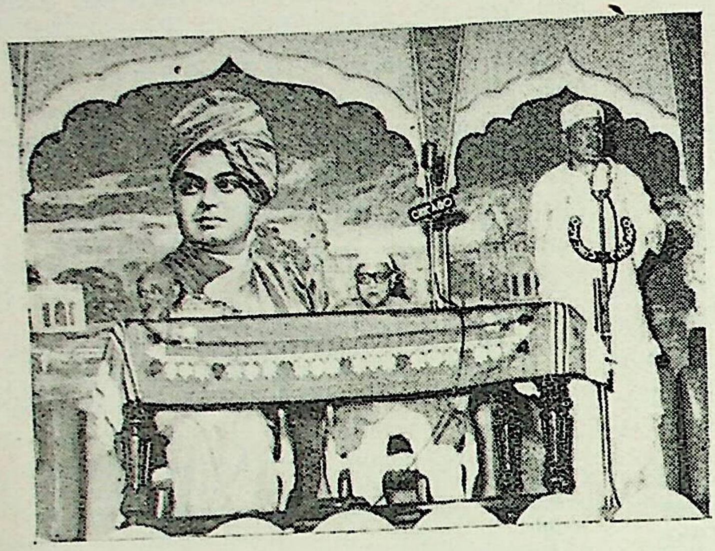
TIRTHA-RENU: By Swami Prajnanananda. Pub.: Sri Ramakrishna Vedanta Math, 18-B, Raja Rajkrishna Street, Calcutta. Pp. 336. Price Rs. 6.00.

'Tirtha-Renu' is a compilation of some class-lectures delivered by Swami Abhedananda in Calcutta. This book is dedicated to the hallowed memory of Swami Vivekananda. It contains some running notes on Rajayoga, Gita, Upanishads, etc. which were gathered by Swami Prajnanananda. Those who are interested in the inspiring personality of Swami Abhedananda, will surely catch a glimpse of his magnificent discourses on the Hindu scriptures in this publication. Though most of these discourses touch the core of the subjects and give their essence, they have not been arranged systematically.

The portions dealing with Rajayoga and conversations are very interesting and educative.

BR. SUDHANGSU.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS
AT SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS



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Swami Suddhasatwananda requesting the Governor to open the Exhibition on 10-1-1964.

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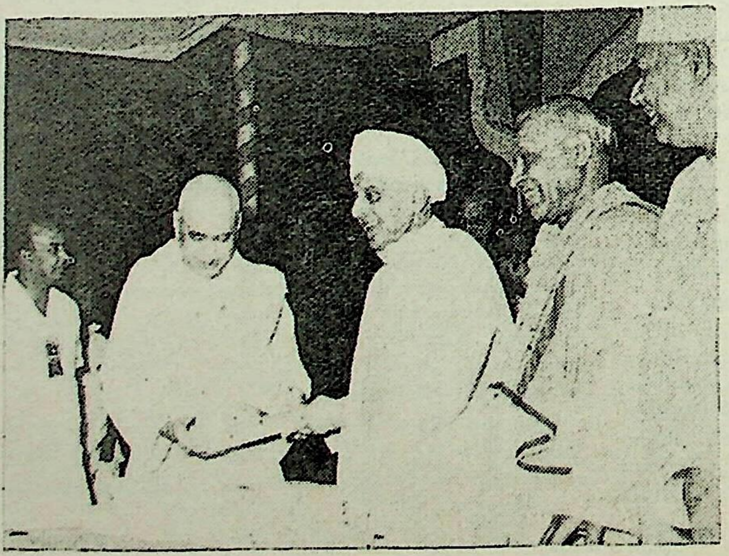
Swami Prabhavananda, and Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar with the delegates to the Inter-Religious Conference being received with Purna-kumbham on 11-1-1964.



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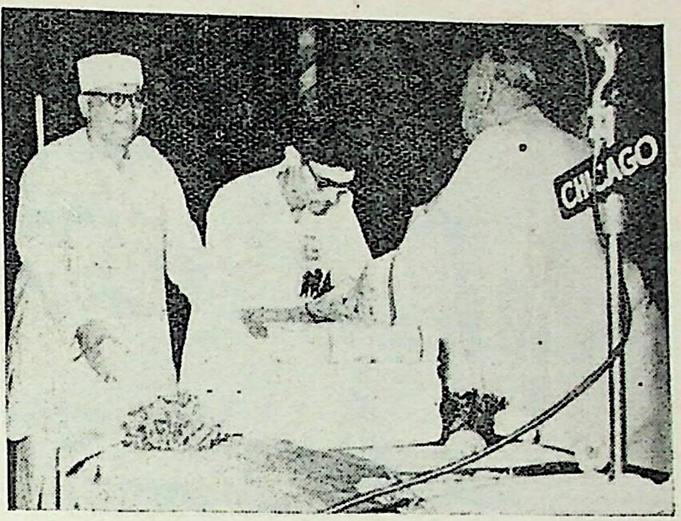
Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar releasing the balance volumes of Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda in Tamil & Telugu on 12-1-1964.



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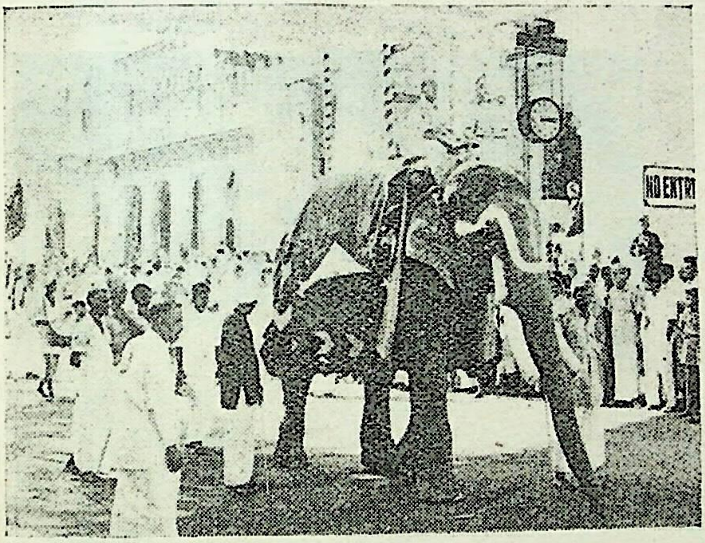
Swami Prabhavananda presenting some books as a token of gratitude to Mr. R. Ganapathi of *Kalki* on 13-1-1964.



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The elephant in the procession on 19-1-1964.

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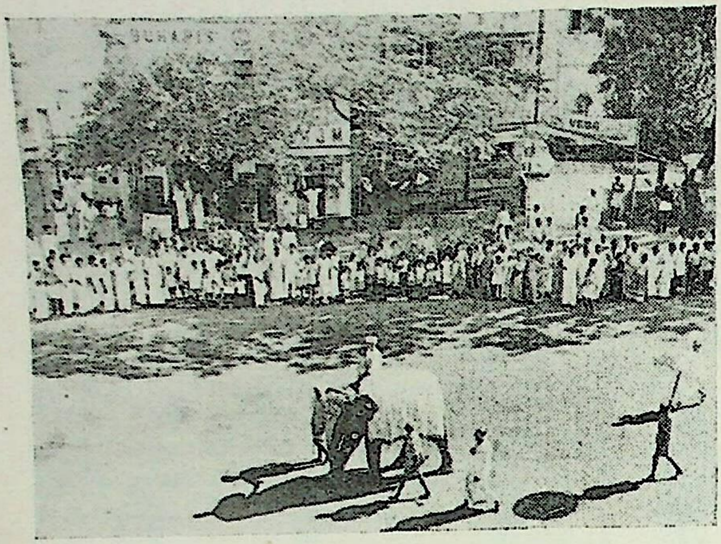
A view of the procession of 19-1-1964.



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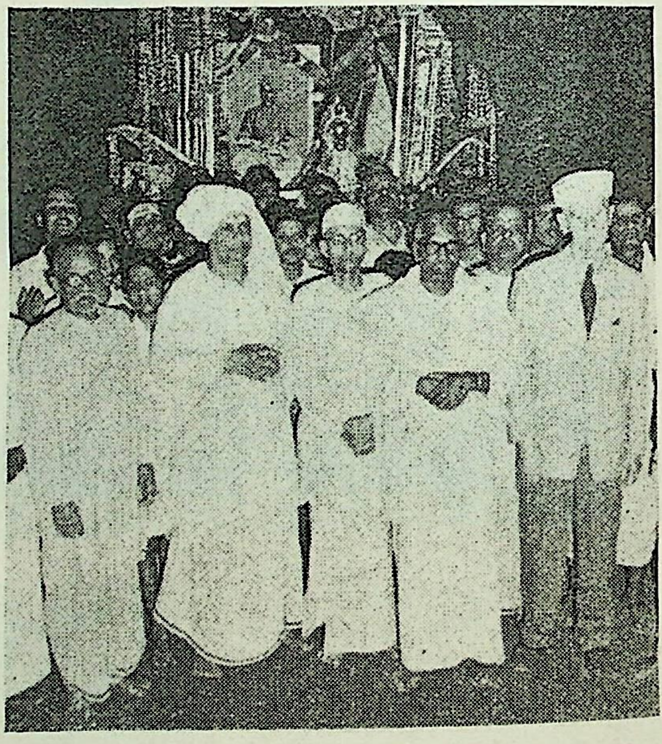
The elephant in the procession passing through the streets of Madras on 19-1-1964.



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A view of the procession on the last day of the celebrations. 27-1-1964 at Mylapore. Madras.

Here we give some more information about the celebrations at the Math: The number of Sannyasis and brahmacharis who came over from other centres to participate in the celebrations was 55. There were also stalls from the Kapaleeswarar Temple, Madras in the Exhibition.

AT MANGALORE

The Centenary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated at Mangalore under the auspices of Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama for six days from the 28th December 1963 to the 2nd January 1964. On Saturday the 28th, the function began with a Nagaswaram recital by Sri P. Narayana Swami and party of Karkala followed by Vedic chanting by Sri Dwivedi Sitarama Sastry. After prayer by the boys of the Balakashrama, Swami Vijnananda welcomed the guests and the gathering. Sri K. Vasudeva Karanth presided. Sriyuts D. R. Bendre Archaka Venkatesha, Narayana Sangama, R. G. Kulkarni and Swami Somanathananda spoke on various aspects of Swamiji's versatile personality.

On the morning of the 29th, the function began at 9 a.m. again with the Nagaswaram recital, Vedic chanting and prayer. Swami Adidevananda welcomed the president Sri G. Somasekhar Rao

(Municipal Chairman), the chief guest Sri B. D. Jatti (Minister for Finance, Government of Mysore), and the gathering. Sri K. S. N. Adiga read the report. The president then requested Sri B. D. Jatti to formally open the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Building. Then Sri Jatti and some of the members of the audience, along with the Swamis of the Order, went in a procession to the Memorial Building where Sri B. D. Jatti ceremonially lighted the lamp, formally declaring the building open. After returning to the place of the meeting, Sri Jatti delivered his address. Swami Somanathananda spoke next. The function then closed with a vote of thanks.

The same evening an assembly of leading Kannada poets was held after a Karnatak Music recital by Sri V. Srinivasan and party of Mangalore and prayer. Swami Adidevananda welcomed the chief guest Sri D. R. Bendre (a foremost poet of Karnataka) who presided as also the other participants. The poets introduced one another to the audience. Then each poet read out his poems specially composed for the occasion on Swamiji. The meeting closed at about 8-30 p.m after a vote of thanks proposed by Swami Vijnananda.

On the 30th, the meeting began at 6 p.m. after a Harikatha performance by Sri K. Gundu Rao of Mysore and prayer. Swami Adidevananda introduced the president Sri K. S. N. Adiga and the speakers to the audience and welcomed them all. Swami Harshananda spoke first on 'Karmayoga Sutras' followed by Sri D. R. Bendre who spoke on 'Swami Vivekananda on Raja Yoga' and Sri K. Suryanarayana Rao who spoke on 'Swami Vivekananda and National Movement in India'. The president summarised the speeches and offered his own remarks. In the end Swami Vijnananda gave a vote of thanks.

On the 31st, the meeting began as usual at 6 p.m. after a recital of devotional music by Srimati Lalita Shivram Ubhayker and prayer by Ashrama boys. Swami Adidevananda then welcomed the president Sri R. R. Diwakar (President of the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi) and the speakers as well as the audience. Sriyuts K. Sampatgiri Rao, M. Yamunacharya and S. S. Raghavachar spoke respectively on 'Swami Vivekananda on Religion', 'Swami Vivekananda on Karma Yoga', and 'Swami Vivekananda on Bhakti Yoga'. After the presidential remarks by Sri R. R. Diwakar, the meeting closed with a vote of thanks.

On 1-1-1964, the meeting began again at 6 p.m. after a Karnatak Music performance by Sriyuts Krishna Murthy, Srinivasan and party from Madras. Swami Vijnananda welcomed the guests and the gathering. Swami Sastrananda and Swami Prabuddhananda spoke respectively on 'Sri Ramakrishna as represented by Swami Vivekananda' and 'Swami Vivekananda and Philosophy of Education'. Sri C. Sundareshan spoke next. The president of the meeting Swami Somanathananda addressed the gathering last. The celebrations concluded with a vote of thanks.

On the evening of the 2nd January, there was a Veena recital by Sri Suryanarayana Rao of Mysore.

AT EGMORE, MADRAS

The birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda was celebrated by the residents of Egmore and Purasawalkam on the 28th and 29th of December, 1963. The functions were held at the Minerva College, Halls Road, Egmore.

On the night of the 28th, a film on the life of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was shown by Swami Sarvajnananda.

The 29th dawned to the sweet sounds of *Suprabhata* music. From 7 a.m. to 10 a.m., there was chanting of the Vedas and the Upanishads by 54 priests. The puja of Sri Ramakrishna with Homa was performed from 9 a.m. to 12 noon. Devotional songs were sung by Bhajan parties.

At 12 noon, about 1,000 Daridranarayanas were fed. Swami Kailasanandaji, the President of the Ramakrishna Math, inaugurated the Daridranarayanaseva.

From 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., there was Harikatha on 'Bhaktha Ramadas' by Sri Ramachandra Sarma The public meeting began at 6-15 a.m. with prayer The Hon'ble Sri Chellapandian, Speaker of the Madras Legislative Assembly, presided. Swami Paramatmananda, Prof. Jagannathachary, Sri Ramamurthy and Dr B. Natarajan spoke on the life and message of Swami Vivekananda. Prof. C. S. Narayanaswami gave a vote of thanks.

From 8-30 p.m. to 12-30 a.m., there was a procession through the streets of Egmore and the neighbourhood with a decorated portrait of Swami Vivekananda placed on a chariot drawn by devotees.

With arati to the portrait of Swamiji, the function came to a close shortly after midnight.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA MATH, MADRAS

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION OF SRI RAMAKRISHNA

The Hundred-and-twenty-ninth Birthday Tithipuja of Bhagavan Sri Ramakrishna was observed on Saturday, the 15th February, 1964. The day started with group meditation followed by Mangalarati in the Shrine at 5 a.m. After devotional songs, there was chanting of select portions from the Gita and the Upanishads by students of the Ramakrishna Mission Students' Home. Worship in the shrine started at 8 a.m. and came to a close at 1 p.m. after the homa was performed. The Chandipuja also was performed. Gita and stotras were also chanted. About 800 devotees and 280 Daridranarayanas were served with food prasad. After the evening service in the shrine, there was reading from the Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna and the gathering was addressed by Swami Suddhasatwananda, Swami Vidyatmananda and Swami Kailasananda.

The public function came off on Sunday, the 16th February. The silent reading of the life and Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna commenced at 8 a.m. and terminated at 10-30 a.m.

There was Harikatha Kalakshepam by Sri Pattabhirama Dikshitar of Sengalipuram on Siru Tondar, from 3 to 5 p.m. The public meeting started with Vedic prayer and opening song. Swami Kailasananda distributed the prizes to the pupils adjudged best in the Inter-School competitions. Sri S. Parthasarathy, Secretary, Vivekananda College welcomed the president of the meeting Sri C. Rajagopalachariar, the speakers and the gathering. Sri Madhava Krishna Kavi Ashtavadhani spoke in Telugu. Sri Balakrishna Joshi, Headmaster, Hindu Theological High School spoke in English on the life and message of Sri Ramakrishna. Sri C. Rajagopalachari who next spoke said, 'Sri Ramakrishna came at a time when the age-old traditions of Hinduism were attacked not only by people of other religions but also by some institutions which were the off-shoots of Hinduism itself. He established by his own example that image worship is not a sin.' He also called on people to launch a cold war, on behalf of God and religion, against Godless men. India, he said, was peculiarly fitted for running this type of cold war, as it did not possess those deadly weapons of destruction. He also expressed the hope that the whole of Asia and even Africa, which both did not possess such terrible weapons, would most surely be on the side of India in this cold war. Sri A. S. Gnanasambandam next spoke in Tamil.

Swami Kailasananda delivered the concluding speech. After a vote of thanks, the meeting came to an end. The Harikatha and the meeting were held in the hall of the Swami Vivekananda Centenary Building, in the Math premises.

There was Bhajan led by Swami Priyananda in the main hall of the Math building, below the shrine, from 8 to 9 p.m.

VEDANTA KESARI

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Signature of the Publisher,
(Sd.) SWAMI SUDDHASATWANANDA

Date: 24-2-1964

.... Be bold and face
The Truth! Be one with it! Let visions cease.
Or, if you cannot, dream but truer dreams,
Which are Eternal Love and Service Free.
Swami Vivekananda

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PANCADAŚĪ

तैजसा विश्वतां याता देवतिर्यङ्नरादयः । ते पराग्दर्शिनः प्रत्यक् तत्वबोधविवर्जिताः ॥ २९ ॥

(*Asmin sthūle dehe,* in this gross body) ; *taijasā,* the individual souls (called by the name *taijas*) ; *viśwatām yātā,* obtained the name *viśwa. Deva,* gods ; *tiryak,* lower beings such as animals ; *narādayaḥ,* men etc. ; *té,* they (these souls called *viśwa*) ; *pratyak tattwa,* the indwelling truth ; *bodha,* knowledge ; *vivarjitāḥ,* being devoid of ; *parāk,* external things ; *darśinaḥ,* perceivers.

29. In these individual gross bodies, the *taijasa* (the individual souls) attain the name of *Viśwa* as well. These individual souls called the *Viśwas* embody themselves as gods, lower animals, man and the like. In these bodies they being ignorant of the knowledge of the Indwelling Spirit, perceive only external things such as sense objects and sensations.

कुर्वते कर्म भोगाय कर्म कर्तुं च भुञ्जते । नद्यां कीटा इवावर्तादावर्तान्तरमाशु ते ॥
व्रजन्तो जन्मनो जन्म लभन्ते नैव निर्वृतिम् ॥ ३० ॥

Bhogāya, for the enjoyment ; *karma,* action ; *kurvaté,* do ; *karma,* action ; *kartum,* to do ; *ca,* also ; *bhunjaté,* experience (the fruits of action). *Nadyām,* in the current of the river ; *āvartāt,* from one whirlpool ; *āvartāntaram,* to another whirlpool ; *kiṭāḥ,* worms ; *iva,* like ; *té,* these jivas ; *āśu,* rapidly ; *janmanaḥ,* from birth ; *janma,* to birth ; *vrajantaḥ,* transmigrating ; *nirvṛtim,* bliss ; *naiva,* never ; *labhanté,* attain.

30. The *jīvas,* (who are ignorant of their true nature) do action for enjoyment here and hereafter ; and during that enjoyment also go on doing action. After enjoying the fruits of their actions here, they are carried away elsewhere by the force of the residue of fruits of their action to some other spheres.[1] Like worms caught in the current of a river and carried from one whirlpool to another, these *jīvas* rapidly transmigrate from birth to birth and never attain bliss.[2]

(*Continued on page* 639)

SIGNIFICANCE OF SYMBOLS IN SPIRITUAL LIFE

Symbols and ensigns have been in vogue from time out of mind. They have not become obsolete with the advance of time or science. Probably today more symbols or signs are used in the world than ever before — nations have their particular flags, military personnel have their ensigns, manufacturers have their trade marks, governments have their seals, political parties have their symbols. The signs and symbols, connected with a nation remind one of its peculiarity, its status in the world, its contribution to the welfare or hardship of the world. The manufacturer's trade mark is an assurance of the genuineness of the products, if they, the products, have proved their usefulness. So also every other emblem brings with it the memory of the thing it represents so vividly as if its whole history had been presented to us in a nutshell.

Another type of sign has, traditionally, come to be recognised as representing a particular sentiment or wish — the white flag in battle indicates surrender; an olive branch is taken as a token of disposition on the part of the bearer for reconciliation; red signals mark danger ahead and green presents a clear way. There are again some distinctive signals which the crew of an aircraft have to understand in its approach to an airport. In short, symbolism is weaved into the fabric of man's life ancient or modern, scientific or unscientific.

Religion also has adopted this method of symbolism and is as old as religion itself. For instance we have in the Ṛg Veda, which is acknowledged as the oldest written record of spiritual revelations, the *Puruṣa Sūkta* where the Divine is conceived of as a person with millions of heads, myriads of eyes and legs, pervading all the universe and also transcending it.[1] Human beings are on the highest scale of evolution according to any estimate, not excluding that of biological science. Most of the people, therefore, can understand God only as a person. The conception of the ordinary man cannot go beyond it. He can understand Him as a benevolent, beneficent, munificent Person, always ready to help His children. This is an anthropomorphic conception no doubt, but that is nearest to the Truth. But here again the Vedas excel. The very idea is put in a way as to mean more than what meets the eye. It does not mean that an actual form like that of a person was conceived by the Rishis. The real meaning is that the Divine manifests in all beings of this universe and is beyond also. This is made clear in the next two Ṛks. 'This whole universe that we see is only that Puruṣa (the Divine). That which is past, and that which is yet to come that also is only Puruṣa. He is again the Lord of immortality. He manifests in the form of this world for the experience of the *jīvas* but on that account this is not His true essence. All this is only His power, Puruṣa transcends all. This universe and all its beings are only one fourth of Him, the rest immutable portion rests in His own bright self-illumined nature.'[2] Here again the proportion is only figurative, just to show that the expanse and extent of the Puruṣa is immeasurable. He is infinite — that is conveyed by these hymns. So though the idea appears in the beginning as anthropomorphic, a little deeper investigation belies this theory.

Again, this symbolic methodology was used both in the Yajñas or sacrifices and Upāsana or meditation as well. In the Aśwamedha

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[1] सहस्रशीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्रपात् ।
स भूमिं विश्वतो वृत्वात्यतिष्ठद्दशाङ्गुलम् ॥
Rig Veda, 10. 7. 90. 1.

[2] पुरुष एवेदं सर्वं यद्भूतं यच्च भव्यम् ।
उतामृतत्वस्येशानो यदन्नेनातिरोहति ॥
एतावानस्य महिमातो ज्यायाँश्च पूरुषः ।
पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ॥
Ibid., 10. 7. 90. 2 & 3.

Yajña, for instance, the body of the sacrificial horse was considered to be the body of the Virāt Puruṣa, the Cosmic Being. Every part of it represented symbolically some aspect of the Cosmic Being — the dawn was represented by the head of the horse, the sun by its eye, the air by its vital force, the fire by its open mouth, and so on. So even while the sacrifice was being conducted the goal aimed at was to impress the constant thought of the Divine. Man lives usually on the mundane plane ; very gross are his enjoyments. So the Vedas said that he can have better and more enduring enjoyments if he laid store in the other worlds. He would go to heaven and live happily for a long time there if he did certain sacrifices. They even said that he became immortal, in the sense that the duration of the life there was infinite compared to his mortal span. Among sacrifices the Aśwamedha was pronounced to give the highest fruit — attainment of the highest heaven, the Brahmaloka. But it entailed heavy expenditure and collection of rare ingredients which were possible only for kings and emperors. On the other hand there were some obligatory sacrifices to be done by a Brahmana. The life of the Brahmana was a life of abstinence and sacrifice. He had to perform every month two sacrifices known as Darśapūrṇamāsa, for a long period of thirty years, from the day he lights the fire, or in some cases for the rest of his life. Each sacrifice took two days ; and on these days he had to abstain from meat and other carnal pleasures. Besides he had to perform the Agnihotra sacrifice, twice daily, once immediately after sunset and again just before sunrise, all through his life. Again there were other sacrifices which a covetor of heaven would have to do. The sacrifices, the performance of which required observance of great austerity and self-control, helped to cleanse the minds of the sacrificers. The purified mind in its turn reflected the truths of religion clearly. So though the sacrificer might have started with the most earthly of motives, he would soon get over them and long to know about the Eternal Truth. This was the purpose of the *karma kāṇḍa* of the Vedas — to sublimate man by leading him gradually from gross to the subtle.

II

In respect of Upāsana one proceeds from subtle symbols to subtler ones. Once, Narada approached Sanatkumara, one of the first four recluses and a mind-born son of Brahma, and requested to be taught. Sanatkumara wanted to know what Narada already knew. Narada replied, 'I have studied the Vedas, the puranas, the itihasas' and so on. In brief, every science that was then extant was known to him. But he added 'I know only the *mantras* (the words, and their word-meanings) but do not know about the Ātman. I have heard from persons like you that a knower of Ātman overcomes grief. Respected Sir, I am still under the sway of pain and pleasure. Please ferry me across this ocean of grief.'[3] Knowing the meaning of the texts of the scriptures is not knowledge of Ātman. It does not make one perfect ; does not free one from the pairs of opposites. Narada felt it keenly in spite of all his knowledge of the different Śāstras.

'This (that you know) is all name only. Meditate on it as Brahman,'[4] says Sanatkumara. By meditating on it one can reach to whatever is named. 'Is there anything higher than name ?' asked Narada. 'Definitely there is. Speech is greater than name. Through speech only you understand everything. Meditate upon speech,' replied the preceptor. Narada again asked whether there was anything greater than speech. The preceptor by and by instructed that mind was greater than speech ; will was greater than mind ; *chitta* was greater than the will ; meditation was greater than *chitta* ; knowledge was greater than meditation, and so on until he came to *prāṇa*. Narada who was every time questioning whether there was anything greater than what the teacher was describing, failed to ask whether there was anything greater than *Prāṇa*.

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[3] *Chandogya Up.* 7. 1. 3.

[4] नामैवैतन्नामोपास्स्व । *Ibid*., 7. 1. 4.

For he thought *Prāṇa* as represented by Hiranyagarbha was the final reality. Though the disciple did not ask, the preceptor knowing his worthiness, of his own accord instructs Narada not to be satisfied with the knowledge of the *Prāṇa,* that there was something higher than *Prāṇa* which was to be known. One does not go beyond disputes (*ativādi*) by knowing *Prāṇa*. One should seek the Truth to become a true *ativādi*.

Narada seeks refuge again with the preceptor and desires to be illumined. 'That which is the vast, that is bliss. There is no happiness in these little things. In the Great one alone is bliss. That vast one is to be known.'[5] And what is that vast one ? 'When one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, knows none other, that is the Great one.'[6] When one goes beyond duality one knows the Great one, Brahman.

In this episode, mentioned in the Upaniṣad, we see how gradually Narada was asked to seek higher and higher truths. Though Name (the *Śāstras*) was not itself Brahman, he was asked to meditate on that as Brahman, then on speech and so on. These were projected as symbols of Brahman, and such meditation had their own results, far superior to the mundane things. But they were not final. The finale was to be reached only in Brahman. Why did not the preceptor immediately enlighten the disciple ? The truth is elusive, almost impossible to understand and there is the danger of misunderstanding when taught to immature minds.

III

A brilliant example, of how difficult of assimilation subtle truths are, is found in Prajapati's instruction to Indra and Virochana in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad.* The story runs thus: Once Prajapati, the Lord of the Universe, announced that he who knows the Ātman, which is untouched by taint, unageing, deathless, free from sorrow, devoid of hunger and thirst, whose desires are true, whose wishes are facts, attains to all the worlds and obtains all his desires. This declaration led the gods and demons, who were naturally hankering after enjoyments, possessions and overlordship of the worlds, to depute their kings Indra and Virochana to learn that knowledge from Prajapati. It was the tradition in those days to go to a teacher with all humility and serve him. The preceptor would, when he thought that they had been sufficiently long with him to understand the knowledge he was going to impart, ask them with what intention they were living with him. Prajapati also followed the rule. He allowed them to serve him and stay with him for thirty two years, on the completion of which period he asked what they wanted to know. They expressed their desire to know about the Ātman. Prajapati said : 'That Puruṣa which is seen in the eye that is the Ātman ; It is immortal ; It is fearless ; It is Brahman.'[7] The purport of Prajapati's instruction was to make them understand that, the Ātman seen by the Yogis of controlled senses and annihilated desires, is Brahman. But the disciples, because of their want of penetration, understood Ātman as the reflection seen in the eye. The symbolical expression was overlooked and the literal meaning was taken.

The disciples — however it should be said to their credit, to make sure that what they understood as the Ātman was correct — asked whether it was the same Ātman which is reflected in the water and in the mirror. Prajapati, not to embarrass them by saying that they were completely wrong, said that it was so and that was 'seen in all these'. Ātman being the innermost of all beings and nearest to the mind could be seen inside all. But again the disciples missed His point and took it too literally. Prajapati again tried to impress on them that they were mistaken, by asking them to see their reflection in water first as they were

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[5] यो वै भूमा तत्सुखं नाल्पे सुखमस्ति भूमेव सुखं भूमात्त्वेव विजिज्ञासितव्यः ॥ *Ibid.,* 7. 23. 1.

[6] *Ibid.,* 7. 24. 1.

[7] य एषोऽक्षिणि पुरुषो दृश्यत एष आत्मेति होवाचैतदमृतमभयमेतद्ब्रह्म ॥ *Ibid.,* 8. 7. 4.

—with beard and hair unkempt and dressed in ascetic robes—and again after they had shaven and adorned themselves. Yet by then they were so convinced of their grasp of the subject that they did not take any particular note of the instruction. They took their outer form to be Ātman and left.

Virochana had no speck of doubt as to the clarity and veracity of his understanding. So he went and proclaimed to his subjects that the body was Ātman and that It should be well fed and taken care of. Indra on the other hand, when he had gone a little distance, reflected over the two images he had seen. He thought, 'If this body is Ātman, then it too changes—when the body is well-adorned Ātman becomes adorned, when well-clothed It becomes clothed, when cleansed It looks clean, likewise when the body is blinded Ātman also becomes blind, when the leg becomes lame Ātman also becomes lame, if so with the death of the body Ātman also dies. Then where is the result promised by Prajapati?' Thus cogitating Indra returns. Prajapati asks: 'You had gone well-pleased with yourself along with Virochana. What brings you now?' Indra replies, 'Lord, You did not mean, that this reflection was Ātman when you said that which is seen in the eye is Ātman.' 'No, certainly not;' replied Prajapati, 'live another thirty two years with Me and I shall teach you.' Indra did so, and Prajapati again spoke to him: 'That which you see enjoying many things in the dream that is Ātman.' Indra was satisfied and started for his abode. But he mused, 'Though this Ātman is not affected by the modifications or maimings of the body yet it also is sometimes as if sorrowful, as if weeps. So this also cannot be the Ātman that the Lord meant.'

A second time he returns and asks to be enlightened. Prajapati asks him to live with him again for another thirty-two years, at the end of which He says, 'that which you see in deep sleep, when even dream is not seen that is Ātman.' Indra departed delighted at having known, what he considered as the secret about Ātman. But again doubt assailed him. And he returned and said: 'Lord, in the state you have described now to me, I do not see anything as to say "This am I" neither do I see these creatures. It is almost dark, everything seems, as if, destroyed there. In this I do not see any of your promised fruits.'[8] 'Yes, it is as you say; reside another five years with Me and then I shall teach you,' exhorted Prajapati.

At the end of the period Prajapati said: 'It is true that what you perceived with your eyes and other senses, as also the mind, evaporate into void in deep sleep. You should not be sorry for it. For this body (senses and the mind) are beseized by death. It is subject to destruction, but it is the abode of Ātman, which is incorporeal, and immortal. As long as the Self is embodied and identifies itself with the body there will be pain and pleasure. It is unavoidable. Pain and pleasure do not touch him alone who transcends the body idea.'[9] A glimpse of which one feels in deep sleep.

We have now seen how the same advice was differently interpreted by different persons, due to the lack of acumen to understand and absence of the required purity of mind to reflect. That is why a graded course and proper symbols are a necessity in the beginning and in most cases for a long time.

IV

Raja Yoga is another method of approach to the Divine. To attain *samādhi* by control of the life-breath, *prāṇa* is the way prescribed therein. Patanjali in his Yoga Sūtras at one place says, *samādhi* can be attained also 'by devotion to Īśvara.'[10] Then he gives some idea with regard to Īśvara. But the idea to be remembered is to be condensed or named. So he posits, 'His symbol is Om.'[11] Swami Vivekananda explaining this *sūtra* says : 'Every idea that you have in the mind has a counterpart in a word ; the word and thought are inseparable. The internal part of one and the same thing is what we call thought. No man can, by analysis, separate thought from word.' Sounds may vary according to languages but the relation between the sounds and thought is a natural one. Swamiji further states, 'Symbol is the manifestor of the thing signified, and if the thing signified has already an existence, and if, by experience, we know that the symbol has expressed that thing many times, then we are sure that there is a real relation between them. Even if the things are not present, there will be thousands who will know them by their symbols.' Millions of aspirants have verified the efficacy of this word 'Om'. In the Upaniṣads it is said that this Om represents the Universe, past, present, and future and even that which is beyond the three times ; beyond the universe.[12]

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[8] नाहं खल्वयं भगव एवं संप्रत्यात्मानं
जानात्ययमहमस्मीति नो एवेमानि भूतानि
विनाशमेवापीतो भवति नाहमत्र भोग्यं पश्यामि ॥
Ibid., 8. 11. 2.

[9] *Ibid.*, 8. 12. 1.

[10] ईश्वरप्रणिधानाद्वा ॥ *Yoga Sutras*, 1. 23.

Patanjali assures us that a repetition of this *mantra* along with meditation on its meaning[13] leads to the desired end, *samādhi*. How does this repetition of a *mantra* purify the mind ? A scientific mind will naturally pose this question. We have to recall here that man is born with a load of *samskāras*, inborn tendencies. What has made these tendencies, rather how are these inclinations created ? They are created by us. Whatever we think, speak or do, will and feel disturb the mind-stuff. Swamiji has compared this mind-stuff to a lake. When we throw stones in the water of a lake it is disturbed. Ripples are seen to spread all around. The stones or pebbles go and deposit at the bottom. Likewise the thoughts that we think and actions that we do have an immediate effect of disturbing the tranquillity of the mind, and has a later, more enduring effect as an impression deposited in the recesses of the mind in the form of a tendency — tending to arise again when suitable opportunity presents itself. In Swami Vivekananda's words, they leave a furrow, as it were, in the brain and after a time when the actions are repeated man is compelled to move along this line. Any attempt to deviate from this beaten path is vigorously resisted by the mind. These are called *samskāras*. How then are we to overcome these *samskāras* ? Sri Ramakrishna used to say a thorn that has pricked you must be extracted by the aid of another thorn. The evil *samskāras* are to be got rid of by good acts, and good thoughts. By repetition of a *mantra* and meditating on its meaning the mind is secured from sliding back into its old ruts. Fresh *samskaras* are formed by such constant meditation which overwhelm the evil ones, if the practice has been long and intense. The mind being rid of dross inclines naturally towards tranquillity.

The path of Raja Yoga, no doubt, is through psychic control. It prescribes the control of the *prāṇa*,[14] vital force, — which Swamiji calls the energy in the universe — as a means to purify the mind-stuff. This is accomplished by the regulation of breath as a first means. The Yoga *śāstra* gives detailed instructions as to how long one has to breathe in, how long to hold it in and how long one should take to expel it. Swami Vivekananda suggests that one should, instead of simply counting numbers to measure time, repeat a holy name, which is the symbol of the Godhead, while doing so, so that one's mind may all the while remain in the thought of the Divine.

Again if this idea appears too abstract for the aspirant, Patanjali suggests alternatives. He says, 'Concentration on an Effulgent Light which is beyond sorrow ; or on the heart that has given up all attachments to sense objects ; or anything that appeals to one and is good,'[15] is also helpful.

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[11] तस्य वाचकः प्रणवः ॥ *Ibid.*, 1. 27.

[12] *Mandukya Upanishad,* 1.

[13] तज्जपस्तदर्थभावनम् ॥ *Yoga Sutras,* 1. 28.

[14] प्रच्छर्दन विधारणाभ्यां वा प्राणस्य ॥ *Ibid.*, 1. 34.

[15] *Ibid.*, 1. 36 to 39.

V

With the passage of time when man became more and more extrovert, when he could no longer abide by the duties laid down for him due to various reasons, when ritualistic sacrifices became blind observances and soulless, Hindu teachers developed this idea of symbolic representation of the Godhead so that it could be easily understood even by the common man. Images, and *sālagrams*, and temples and shrines to house them came into being. Images were not looked upon at any time even by the most ignorant Hindu as mere stone or wood. To him they were the reminders of the Conscious Divine, symbols of Divinity. It is easy to criticize and condemn the image-worship of the Hindu as idolatry, but why does not one, who condemns such worship look to his own creed. Every sect, every religion worships a symbol. But each one thinks that his own symbol is a true one, a correct representation of the Godhead and that all others are in the wrong. This is a perverted view of things and most abject form of self-love. There may have crept some abuses into such worship. But abuses of all sublime thoughts and practices are seen in every sect and every religion. That is no reason to condemn the practice itself. One has to take the good and leave out the evil. If it has done a little harm at some time owing to the evil hands into which the practice had fallen, it has done infinite good also. Further, as long as man is man, more inclined towards flesh than soul, he requires all the other outer paraphernalia as well to hammer into his consciousness the existence of a Supreme Being which he should not forget. It is fruitless to speak against symbols. They have contributed enormously to the religious culture and spiritual upliftment of man and will continue to do so in future. Masses require them and even the majority of the intellectual classes cannot dispense with them without trepidation as to the consequences. The only thing we should guard against is that such worship does not take a dogmatic shape to enforce one's symbol or image on others.

We shall conclude with Sri Ramakrishna's exhortation regarding image-worship: 'But why clay? It is an image of spirit. Even if the image *is* made of clay, there is need for that sort of worship. He who is the Lord of the Universe has arranged all these forms to suit different men in different stages of knowledge.' What is said of images is also true of symbols.

PANCADAŚĪ

(*Continued from Page* 633)

[1] Those who have good actions to their credit attain good births and those who have evil actions go to lower births, after having enjoyed the merit of their good actions in heaven. But there is a third state which is rotation here on the earth itself which is being born and dying, like the worms and insects. (Chandogya Up. 5.10.7 and 8)

[2] He goes from death to death who sees, as it were, many here.

मृत्योः स मृत्युंगच्छति य इह नानेव पश्यति । *Katha* 4-11.

Note : Is there then no hope for these *Jīvas* at all? This will be explained in the next two verses.

MEMOIRS OF SWAMI ADBHUTANANDA

(A free translation of the Bengali book, *Smritikatha*)

(*Continued from the previous issue*)

Now we shall narrate what we heard from Lātu Maharaj about Rakhal Maharaj (Swami Brahmananda).

'Once Rakhal Babu took a little of the food meant for the Master. When the latter came to know of it he said, "What's this Rakhal? How could you take it before it is offered to 'Mother'? And you know I do not eat, anything without offering it to Her." ... After Rakhal babu's marriage Manomohan babu brought them — the bride and the groom — both to the Master at Dakshineswar. The Master blessed them and assured the bride saying, "Be not afraid, I will not, snatch away Rakhal from you. On the contrary I will send him to you now and then." He then asked them to go to Nahabatkhana, i.e. to Holy Mother and whispered into my ears to ask Mother to put a coin into the bride's hand and see her face.* Mother did what she was asked to do.'

A devotee: 'Why so, Maharaj? Putting a coin into her hand and seeing her face?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Ah! What intelligence! Why do you forget that Rakhal babu was, the Master's (spiritual) son? Do they see the daughter-in-law's face without presents? Don't you observe it at your home?'

A devotee: 'Yes, that I know. But the Master was a Paramahamsa, above all rites and customs. Why should he observe these social rules of householders?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'This is his uniqueness. He observed the said rules and regulations rather in detail. Did he not say, "If I break one rule, you (disciples) will throw the whole set overboard?" And again, "If I observe all meticulously you may follow a few perfunctorily." ... True to his words the Master used to send Rakhal babu home now and then and would not allow him to be with him for a long time at a stretch. But when he would return the Master would ask him to have three sips of Ganges water first as a purificatory rite, then to proceed to the temple of Kali. ... The day the Master heard that a son was born to Rakhal babu he said, "That is the end of his destined enjoyments. Now he will have to work for Mother's Lila." ... We too observed that just after that Rakhal babu's visits to Dakshineswar became much oftener. And the Master asked him, to be engaged in prayer and meditation and counting beads incessantly, which he did.† During this time Rakhal babu passed through a peculiar mood commonly found among children before their teens. If the Master showed love to any other boy devotee Rakhal used to get piqued. Observing this the Master said to him, "It is easy for a *sadhu* to renounce other things. But to give up the desire for being the most beloved of one he loves dearly is rather difficult." But Rakhal babu transcended that also. It is for this reason that Brother Loren once said, "Rakhal is superior to all of us in spirituality." The Master was exceedingly joyous the day Rakhal would be at Dakshineswar. That night he would take all of us into his room and ask us to meditate together. But later it was changed; we would be asked to go to different places in the garden and meditate separately.'

'1885. Senior Gopal cherished the idea of getting initiation from the Master. But he could not express it to him before others. Perhaps he was shy. (The Master generally did not give formal initiation but would communicate spiritual power by touch or mere will). One day Gopaldā found the Master strolling all alone in the garden. He took this opportunity, came to him quickly and (as I found him) knelt down and catching hold of both his feet started shedding profuse tears. The Master pulled him up by his hands, Gopaldā still crying like a child. What the Master told him I could not hear but since then, we found Gopaldā invariably joining in the *kirtana* in the Vishnu temple.'

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* It was the custom in Bengal, when the bride arrived at her father-in-law's house after the marriage, which took place at the bride's father's house, the elderly lady relatives of the groom each at a time, would remove the veil covering the bride's face and implant a kiss and put some coins and other presents into her hands. This is what is known as 'Seeing the bride's face'.

† More of this will be related in the Chapter on Latu's spiritual practices.

* * *

'Look here, one day Brother Harish gave us a very nice idea which we have treasured devotedly. He said "Everyone has to get his cheque passed through the Master to be honoured by any bank."'

A devotee : 'What is the idea behind it? I don't follow it.'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Yea! You know of one kind of bank, namely of money. But there is another kind — of grace, which you do not know. There come on earth in a particular period of time some saints and gurus without whose grace no one can attain divine love. Brother Harish regarded the Master as one such. Just as one deposits money with a bank, and on the strength of this the bank issues cheques, so the inner circle of devotees deposited their spiritual practices with the Master, who incarnated with them and issued the cheques of grace to them.'

The devotee : 'Of what spiritual practices are you speaking, Maharaj? Those that you performed at Dakshineswar or others that you did in previous births?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Do you think austerities, however intense, performed in one life can take you to God? Dhruva, that prince of devotees, got a little vain when he had the vision of Lord Vishnu with what he thought as just a funny effort of his one life. Narada understood it and took him on a travel, in the course of which they came to a spot with a high mound. On being asked Narada said, "Don't you know? It is a mound of bones of your bodies of previous incarnations." "Ah!" said Dhruva, "I had to come to the earth so many times!" Thus did his vanity vanish. So I say one life's austerities are quite inadequate for realizing God. Life after life one has to go on performing austerities for His sake. All these remain deposited with Him. When at last the accumulation is deemed nearing adequacy the Lord's grace descends on the devotee. He gets not only the capital but interest too.'

Devotee : 'What's capital, what is interest?'

Lātu Maharaj : 'Interest is the grace of a competent guru. When this is received devotees are beside themselves with joy. Then, with renewed vigour they start performing austerities to get back their capital. When the Lord is realized with the grace of the guru, that is the realization of the capital.'

Devotee : 'Ha! It is like having an insurance policy. The 'Life policy' is there, there is the endowment; over and above them you have the payment of a bonus!'

This made Lātu Maharaj laugh.

'Once the Master took us to Bhadreswar. The journey was by boat. We hired four boats. There was a fanfare of Khols, cymbals, bugles, horns, etc. Hearing our loud singing of Lord's name there was quite a big crowd on the other side of the Ganga. People, went on offering basketfuls of *batasā*. There we were guests of Śiva Acharya. There a pundit went on arguing against the existence of God, thus confusing the minds of devotees. Seeing this Master told him, "It is after undergoing a good deal of labour that a man comes to believe in God. And you, being a pundit are raising doubts in their minds about God! What kind of scholarship is this my dear?" The pundit said in reply, "Don't, don't think so, Sir; I was only cutting jokes." But, the Master understood that he was not in earnest. So, as was his wont under such circumstances, he touched the pundit all on a sudden and said, "Alas! Your inside, I see, has become all wooden, dry as dust. This life of yours is totally lost. Having read the scriptures, you have learnt hypocrisy." The pundit stammered and left the meeting.'

In this connexion Lātu Maharaj narrated the Master's conversation with Gauri Pandit of Indesh (vide *Lilaprasanga*). 'Thus did the Master used to punish the hypocritical pundits,' said Lātu Maharaj.

'Ramababu once fell seriously ill. But his faith in the Master was so great that he would not call a doctor. The Master came to him and said, "Rama, what is this? In illness everybody calls a physician, that is the general rule. Why should you not do it?" Do you know how Ramababu reacted to this? "I do not know of a physician," said he, "greater than one who has cured me of the high fever of worldliness. The holy water touched by your big toe will cure me of this illness too." At this the Master smiled and called on the devotees to advise him to go for a doctor. But Ramababu remained true to his faith. The holy water mentioned by Ramababu did cure him of his illness. Such was his faith in the Master!'

'Once Girishbabu's son had an attack of cholera. Physicians failed to cure him. Girishbabu sent a man to bring water touched by the holy feet of the Master; the Master sent water consecrated by the touch of the Mother Kali's feet. Girishbabu sent away the physician and the boy got cured with the holy water. Do you know faith works miracles?'

'Master went to Devenbabu's house at Nimu Goswami Lane, Ahiritola. His throat disease had then just started. At that stage it was found that if he took ice the pain lessened. So he used to take ice often. One day he asked a boy (Swami Ramakrishnananda) to buy ice for him. The boy was poor, he used to come to Dakshineswar on foot. He went on foot to the town at Shyambazar purchased ice and covered it so nicely in a towel that he could bring the entire piece intact to Dakshineswar. The Master was very glad and said, "The proverb goes, 'That fellow is a miser to the marrow between whose fingers water does not run off.' But I see you are not only not miserly but munificent, although water (melted ice) did not run out of your palm even in this hot sun."'

A devotee: 'The Master called Śaśi Maharaj "munificent"?'

Lātu Maharaj: 'Tell me who else but he should be called "munificent"? Do you forget that brother Śaśi begged for us and fed us when we were absorbed in meditation and prayer? He who can feed so many out of love — would you not call him "munificent"?'

(But more of Śaśi Maharaj in the Chapter on Lātu Maharaj in Baranagore and Alambazar Math.)

'Listen, when the Master's throat disease went on aggravating, Ramababu, Girishbabu, Manomohanbabu and Sureshbabu wanted to bring him to Calcutta. Then brother Baburam used to stay at Dakshineswar. Master asked his opinion about it. He kept quiet. Seeing that Narenbabu, who happened to be present there, said, "I think the suggestion is good. If you stay in Calcutta it will be easier for us to come and attend upon you as also for the doctors to call on." Vaikunthababu was asked to search for and hire a suitable house. In three or four days he fixed a house at Baghbazar.'

Later events will be described in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XI

When Lātu Maharaj came to serve the Master he was in his critical teens, a period of life when the surge of emotions was violent, when attraction for enjoyments was natural and unsuspected, and therefore emotions got free reins. Moreover he came from a class of society where morals were loose, drinking was universal, glasses passing from father's hands to son's, and vulgar words and deeds were not deemed censurable. It was no small matter for a boy coming from such society to turn his mind away from all temptations and pass his days at Dakshineswar in scaling the heights of renunciation and austerities under the watchful eyes of the strict disciplinarian that the Master was. This was undoubtedly due to the potent influence of holy personages, especially of the Master. It was this influence which kept Lātu wide awake to his defects and diligently work for their eradication. His determination to rid himself of all weakness was so thorough that no austerities to him ever proved too difficult to go through, no obstacles too hard to surmount. A word from the Master promptly evoked a promise, churned out of the depth of his personality and the promise was stoically kept to the last breath.

The Master came to know that Lātu's village society allows drinking. So one day, when Lātu was alone with him the Master said, 'Look here, my boy, to try to meditate under the influence of liquor and to have intimacy with a woman for a *sadhu* (monk) are both nothing but self-deception. Liquor and "woman and gold" raise doubt about the existence of God. If a *sadhu* falls under the influence of either his spiritual progress is ruined for the life.' These words opened his eyes. 'The secret desires that now and then peep in my heart and are not allowed to raise their heads,' thought Lātu in amazement, 'are all known to him, I see. He must be knowing the inmost thoughts of all who come in contact with him. It is useless to try to hide anything from him.' Henceforward Lātu was seen, bringing the slightest puff of thought rising in his mind immediately to the Master.

'It so happened one day that as I was passing by a grog-shop at the Cossipore turn, while going to Ramababu's house, all on a sudden I felt very bad. I could not understand why. I could not concentrate my mind on anything. Immediately on my return to Dakshineswar I brought the matter to him (Master). "It is the smell of liquor," said he, "that brought about that mental depression in you. Never have a smell of such things."' To what extent Lātu carried out this order of the Master is best expressed by the incident narrated by Ramababu. One day Ramababu told the Master, 'What a queer order have you passed on that lad? To come to Calcutta the poor boy has to walk eight miles by detour.'

The Master could not recall what peculiar order he had passed on the boy, as a result of which he was put to such trouble and said perplexed, 'What have I told him? What strange order have I passed on him? No, I can't recall any.'

Ramababu: 'Have you not asked him to avoid the smell of liquor? In doing so he avoids those portions of streets where there are grog-shops. And the result is he has to walk eight miles to come to Calcutta.'

Hearing this the Master became very grave, and calling Lātu said, 'I have asked you not to smell liquor. Does it mean you are to avoid streets having liquor shops? Pass by such shops, they will not affect you. When you do so only remember me, desire for drink or for any intoxicant will never rise in your heart.'

In carrying out the orders of the Master to the syllable Lātu showed superhuman determination and industry, not only in the above case but in eradicating all the natural animal instincts that stand in the way of man's higher evolution. Lātu was crowned with success in many a circumstance where stalwarts are carried away by the strong current. Man by nature is a slave to the threefold desire of enjoying good food, good sleep and sex pleasure. But nobody who has not conquered these three greatest enemies of man could ever realize God. People have a queer idea about austerities. Real austerities are indefatigable attempts at the conquest of these three. Lātu's energy never failed him in this.

We have seen above to what extent Lātu went to avoid the smell of liquor. Below are a few incidents illustrative of his attempts at controlling his diet. Lātu was practising wrestling and was habitually doing violent physical exercises. His early aim of life — we have it on the authority of Mahendranath Datta, second brother of Narendra — was to be a wrestler of the first rank. These people, wrestlers, are naturally inclined towards taking substantial food in large quantity. Lātu was no exception to that. We have gathered that at Ramababu's house he used to have delicious dishes, quite substantial. And the quantity he consumed was large. When he came to Dakshineswar delicacies stopped all of a sudden. But to satisfy hunger he had to increase the quantity. He was, however, roused to his senses by the conversation he heard between Yogen Maharaj and the Master.

'Once brother Yogen expressed his desire to serve the Master at night. The Master asked him what he took at night, to which he said, "Chapatis of one pound of flour and potato-curry of half a pound". Master said "Lord save me! You need not serve at night. I will not be able to supply such food to you. Better take your night meal at home and come here to serve if you like."'

Lātu Maharaj continued:

'You know I was a good eater. Chapatis of flour of two to four pounds were nothing to me. But the day I heard the above conversation I was roused to the sense that those who want to pray and meditate at night must eat very little. I at once decreased the quantity of food. For a couple of months I had some trouble, later I got inured to that. Then I found that even if I wanted to I could not take more. One day the Master observed me taking my food and remarked, "The quantity should be reduced still further." I started reducing it, so much so that I used to feel pain in the stomach. The Master understood it and one day said, "My boy, don't go to that extreme. What is necessary for the maintenance of the body should be given it. If you don't, it will again hamper your prayer and meditation." He used to train us thus. It was difficult for us to escape his observing eyes.'

A little earlier Lātu and a number of other devotees were invited to dinner at a devotee's house. As it sometimes happens, a sort of competition in eating started, and Lātu consumed a huge quantity and was praised for that. When the host devotee came to Dakshineswar the next day he narrated the previous night's incident and praised Lātu's power of consuming food. When the devotee went away the Master called Lātu aside and said, "Hello! You should not repeat it in future. During day you may load your stomach fully. It will not harm you so much. But at night your food should be just light refreshments." The Master thus used to instruct Lātu in various ways about his food habits, following which in a couple of years his normal diet, we observed it later, became surprisingly meagre.

The small quantity of food Lātu used to consume during this period attracted the attention of other devotees; and its praise reached the ears of the Master. One day the Master was present when Lātu was taking his noon-day meal and found it was inadequate for keeping his body fit for work and spiritual exercises. So the Master asked him to take his food, along with himself, and used to pour ghee, into his dish with his own hand. This went on for some time. But nature did not cease to take retaliation for transgressing her laws and Lātu had to suffer from various physical ailments for some time at Dakshineswar. We will return to this topic a little later.

Along with restraint in diet the Master taught him how to get mastery over sleep as well. We have it on authority that since his childhood Lātu was a heavy sleeper. Moreover he started wrestling and taking violent physical exercise. As is usual with wrestlers, he became habituated to sleeping long hours. When he came to Dakshineswar to live with the Master his work increased. Naturally he used to fall asleep early evening. One day the Master noticed it and said, "What is this? It is hardly dusk and at this mystic hour you are sleeping! I have never seen a spiritual aspirant behaving in this way. During these hours they should lose themselves in the thought of the Lord. And you are sleeping! Get up, quick." These words woke up Lātu from sleep and as one guilty of a great offence, he hung his head in shame. Great was his remorse, which, unlike others, who would have repeated it later, made him forthwith promise to the Master: 'Never will I sleep during these hours.' This promise he kept up to his last breath. Even when he was dangerously ill, in later life, somebody was always to help him sit straight during evening hours.

(To be continued)

A VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL—A HINDU VIEW*

SWAMI SIDDHINATHANANDA

ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते
पूर्णस्य पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥
ॐ शान्तिः शान्तिः शान्तिः

The Vatican has made a move in recent times for better understanding among the various religions. I do not know the exact scope and nature of the attempt. Whether the proposed Ecumenical Council is meant only for the unification of Christendom or whether it includes all religions in its scope, I do not know. My knowledge about it is very meagre. It is improper for me to venture an opinion without knowing it correctly. Anyway, I have been asked to say something. On hearing about it, certain thoughts occurred to me which I shall share with you.

For the Hindu, religion is realisation. Realisation of what? Of his own true being. What is that?

A sage of yore was asked by his pupil: 'At whose command does the mind speed on? Who prompts the vital airs to do their functions? At whose bidding is the word pronounced? Who directs the eye and the ear?' This inquiry led him to a reality which is not comprehended by any of the senses, a reality which is not finite, a reality by virtue of which man lives.

Another line of inquiry was into the cause of the universe. Every effect must have a cause. What caused the phenomenal world? This led to an uncaused Cause. Its nature was inquired into. It was found to be eternal, infinite, conscious. It was called Brahman. Now the question arose as to what is the relation between the infinite behind the universe and the infinite behind the individual. A startling discovery was made. It was found to be identical.

The realisation of this infinite and eternal nature of one's true being is religion. It is not a matter of intellectual assent or philosophical cogitation, but the direct, immediate and unshakable conviction of its truth that constitutes religion for a Hindu.

This supra-mental vision of Reality is not accessible to all. Man wants a view of Reality which his mind can grasp. Mind is constituted of time and space. So he conceived of Reality through time and space. He called it God and considered himself as part of God. The part found itself separate from the source and hence limited and miserable. It started to struggle to get back to its original home. This struggle of the individual soul to go back to its universal source is religion in practice.

This Reality has no temporal or spatial limits. Similarly, the thirst of the human soul for the infinite is universal. God is not limited or partial to any country or people. So, to the Hindu, there is only one eternal religion. Its application to Indian conditions produced what is called Hinduism; in the Semitic setting, it took the form of Christianity and Islam. The container may be different; the content is the same. This truth was declared by the Vedic sage ages ago in the well-known statement: 'Truth is one, sages call it variously.' Indra, Varuna, Agni are all only different names of the same Being. This Vedic vision is a unique contribution of the Eternal Religion. This discovery is responsible for many unique features of Hinduism. A Hindu cannot and does not quarrel about the name or form. True Hinduism does not know religious persecution or intolerance. It accepts innumerable paths to the same centre. All cannot have the same path, because, the starting point of each is different. The Gita declares that God responds to each according to his approach. This has made Hinduism the most universal of Religions. The Hindu knows no religious parochialism. He does not set any bounds, either spatial or temporal to Reality. The sages of India considered themselves as citizens of the universe. They saw the world as enveloped and interpenetrated by God. To them, every being is a temple of God. They could worship God not only in man but in animal and even in inanimate objects.

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* The Vatican has made a move in recent times for the unification of Christendom and for better understanding among religions. The Most Rev. Benedict Mar Gregorios, the Archbishop of Trivandrum spoke on "The Impact of the Vatican Ecumenical Council on the World", on the second anniversary celebrations of the Trivandrum Fraternity held at the Y.W.C.A. hall, Trivandrum, on 29-2-'64. The organisers wanted the writer to give the Hindu reaction to the move. The above was read at the meeting.

God of all religions must be the same; if not He will be no God. Those who have realised God speak the same language. The prophets of all religions are at one. Then come the philosophers who live by words and arguments. Arguments settle nothing. They raise a lot of noise and confusion. Then come a third group, the preachers. They do not know what they are speaking about. They want to swell their ranks. So they adopt all kinds of methods to win converts. Preachers of different faiths come to clash and they break one another's head. Man will die for religion; will kill for religion; but seldom does he live religion, or live for religion. Wherever men live religion, they are at peace with one and all.

Emperor Asoka, in a rock edict, enjoined his subjects to honour other faiths; he warned them that by showing disrespect to another's religion, they would be dishonouring their own. Akbar, the Great, attempted to bring about a harmony of religions. Thus the Indian vision, tradition and atmosphere are all world-wide. These ideas were not stray thoughts found only in books. Even in the most bigoted of religions, one may come across some broad ideas. But universalism in outlook was a common characteristic of the Hindu nation. When I say this, I am not unaware of certain unfortunate incidents that tarnished the fair name of India and all the religions that are in India. So far as Hinduism is concerned, we have to view these happenings from a historical stand-point. Then, we will find that various forces acted upon the adherents of the Hindu faith and they reacted in a particular manner for self-defence. Then again, it is a political and social phenomenon and not strictly a religious episode. The Hindu can welcome and worship the Christ of the Gospels without doing any violence to his own faith.

True religion never quarrels; quarrel negates religion. It is the politician that creates the quarrels and for his selfish purpose, he exploits religion. A politician has no religion. He uses religion for self-aggrandisement. Politics is self-serving; it is based on exclusion and thrives on hatred. Religion is self-effacing; it is based on inclusion and lives on love. All quarrel is for the loaves and fishes. When religion is made a smoke-screen for pelf and power, fighting starts. But, that is no religion. Then again, religious institutions, when they become rich in worldly goods, lose their pristine purity. In order to maintain their hold and authority, they try to control political power. Then also conflicts arise. Whether it be the politician making use of religion or the religious man controlling the temporal power, it is still making a business of religion for collecting loaves and fishes. Wherever the son of God was seriously about his Father's business, which was not of this world, he refused to make religion a thing of merchandise. He could not brook any money changer in his temple.

At present, the forces of materialism are gathering thick and fast. They threaten the very existence of religion. Organised oppression of every form of religion is gaining ground. It is high time that those who cherish the eternal values of religion, which alone can solve all the problems of man, and the problem that man is to himself and to his fellow-beings, close their ranks, come to understand and appreciate each other and make a united and sustained effort to stem the tidal wave of materialism and selfishness.

So, any movement that will serve this end in any form is a movement in the right direction. It only gladdens the heart of the Hindu to see that his fellow-pilgrims are now beginning to realise the value of the vision of unity which he has been cherishing and nourishing as a valued treasure from times immemorial. He welcomes with open arms all attempts at bringing peace and harmony among all mankind.

SCIENCE AND VIVEKANANDA

MARIA BURGI

The hundred years which separate us from the birth of Vivekananda show up as, probably, the most revolutionary and dramatic period Europe has undergone. I am referring, of course, to the second half of the Nineteenth and to the first half of the Twentieth centuries.

The first period meant, for Europe, the prevalence of Materialism and Positivism which brought about the supremacy of science and economics, and the development of technology. In the domain of the natural sciences especially, all the other hitherto independent systems — and metaphysics even — found themselves hopelessly enmeshed by the methods and the laws of the new materialistic rationality. Man became a number who no longer worried about any kind of transcendence and who used his fellowmen as simply "means to an end". The notion of utility became his highest ideal, and his purpose became the accomplishment and elaboration of the Practical, the Useful, and the Comfortable.

In this sort of atmosphere it is little wonder that man should very soon have started to feel lost and insecure — unable to adapt himself to those mechanical surroundings he had himself created — comfortless and empty in the midst of his physical comforts and his material abundance. Man had lost the Meaning of his Existence and was driven in his anguish to uncover from the ashes of his material delusions the bright, ever burning ember of Truth.

The beginning of the Twentieth century compared with the second half of the Nineteenth is like the burning ember amidst the ashes. Nevertheless, we now come to feel as dwellers of two distinct worlds, one which has vanished behind us, and a new one as yet unexplored. This has added to our anxieties and has created for many of us great difficulties in finding the new, promising elements of our era. Adopting an attitude of indifference or mistrust, we often set ourselves stubbornly against our century without bothering to make the slightest effort to understand its great prospects. Yet nothing can allay our fears better than a clear understanding of the possibilities of our epoch and conscious integration of its many positive elements. These are to be found above all in the great scientific discoveries of our century — and in the implications of these discoveries.

Contrary to its self-sufficiency and arrogance of the last century, Science to-day with all its tremendous achievements treads softly and humbly on the threshold of the Unknown. And Science has come to believe that behind the phenomenal world another world lies hidden which has set the stage for the former. It is the world which Le Roy calls the "Real World". Curious as this may seem, we may truly say that Science in the Twentieth century has come face to face with the veil of Māyā and is now attempting, with all due reverence, to catch a glimpse of what lies behind.

Swami Vivekananda's appearance in our midst — his presence in Europe and America —coincided with the end of the Nineteenth and the beginning of the Twentieth century, with the end of the old Era and the beginning of the new. In the gross, mechanical materialism of our environment Swami Vivekananda, profoundly rooted in the spirit of Advaita Vedanta, was able to foresee the dawn of a new Era and to point the way to a new epoch. This prophet of titanic strength and superhuman courage raised his voice to give spiritual expression to the new perspectives of the West.

Dismissing for a moment the troubles and discords of our civilization, let us consider these new perspectives, and the positive elements which Western thought offers us today in all its domains.

Einstein set the stage with his Relativity Theory. Its impact on the scientific mind was tremendous, and its effect, revolutionary. Here are some of the milestones on the new trails Einstein opened to Science :—

The emergence of the Space-Time unit through the introduction of Time as the Fourth Dimension into the previous Three-Dimensional Space measurement scale in Physics.

The acceptance that a phenomenon differs according to the position occupied by the observer.

The formulation that the seeming opposition between Gravity and Inertia — as introduced by Newton — is in point of fact, a Unity, and that Mass is but a certain form of Energy, and *vice versa.*

Contrary to the theory prevailing since Copernicus that the Universe is unlimited and infinite, Einstein's assertion that it is unlimited but finite — like the surface of a sphere to a Two-Dimensional observer.

Einstein's Theory is especially concerned with Motion. Anything that exists, that is visible, all matter and even the so-called dead matter, is in motion. The theory is built without making use of the concept of Absolute Motion. And yet, besides this relativity of concepts referring to motion, we must not forget that Einstein has partly created and partly introduced in physics a new Absolutism : the unsurpassable Speed of Light. And through this — the Absolute Space Measure.

It is in the non-Euclidian geometry that we have absolute space measures. In the Euclidian geometry our measurements were based on a relationship of comparison with the degrees of the metre, or of other such man-made standard scales of measurement. But the absolute, unmeasurable "nameless numbers" or measures are independent of any comparative relationship. He considers that there is nothing to make us conceive absolute motion, or speed, since we completely lack any fixed point in the universe. The acceptance that the speed of light is the greatest possible velocity, enables Einstein to find the dependence of Time on this absolute velocity.

After Einstein's Theory, the second theory to revolutionise the world of science and to shatter its materialistic scales of the last century is the Theory of the Quantum. Einstein's Relativity Theory and Planck's Quantum Theory if taken together, give an entirely new approach to the world of matter and a new basis to modern thought.

The implications of the theories of Einstein and Planck taken together are radical and very far-reaching. There can no longer be talk of tangible matter on one side and of non-tangible matter on the other, for it has been proved that matter and energy are identical.

Followers of Einstein and Planck show an increasing tendency to abolish the old concept of dualism in their scientific comprehension of phenomena. Indeed we now see them to have proceeded beyond their traditional analytical methods of comprehending nature and its oppositions, to a new *synthetic* interpretation of phenomena where the synthesis conceived is not a mere outcome of oppositions. The new approach is both subtle and significant. For in refuting the old dualistic oppositions between matter and energy they do not introduce a new extreme, that of Monism, in other words, that all is matter or all is energy. They come nearer to the conception of a "double-faced" but not dual, reality of phenomena, and this new scientific approach could be called the "non-dualistic" approach.

In this connection, the first name which comes to mind is that of De Broglie. Until his arrival on the scientific scene, two contradictory theories on the nature of Light had been put forward — the Corpuscular Theory and the Theory of Waves. De Broglie came and integrated these two apparent incompatibilities into an entirely novel concept, for he was to show that Light consists of Corpuscles as well as Waves, without the one excluding the other, in spite of their contrasting aspects. Both aspects are of one and the same reality of Light; and De Broglie's theory proved to be equally true for all other particles of matter and especially for electrons.

It is important to remember that the two contrasting aspects are never to be seen together at the same moment; experiments show only the one or the other aspect.

Bohr had advanced this notion of the "double-faced" and contrasting nature of all particles in his theoretical formula of the principle of 'complementarity'. We have to accept this as a form of knowledge which has greatly changed our views on Matter. For as long as matter could be conceived as a product of something tangible (material) or as a product of something (non-tangible) spiritual, there was a firm and irreconcilable conviction established for the one or the other; but according to modern scientific conclusions, matter proves itself to be neither the one, nor the other.

To the question 'Is matter more than just mass?', modern science replies, 'It is, and it is not'. In fact, matter becomes energy and energy becomes matter — yes, the experiment of 'transmutation' has succeeded in our modern times! One can de-materialise the tangible and materialise the non-tangible.

The above-mentioned perspectives are being constantly exploited and enlarged. There is Heisenberg, for example, who has contributed his principle of Relations of Uncertainty.

He derives his theory from the fact that we can never exactly and at the same time determine both the location and the momentum of corpuscles.

Thus Heisenberg has dealt a death blow to the doctrine of Determinism. He himself says: 'According to the sharp formulation of the laws of causality, when we know exactly the present we can calculate the future.' In this statement Heisenberg affirms 'it is not the conclusion which is wrong, but the presupposition. In fact we principally cannot know the present in all its degrees of determination.' In another context, Planck had already declared: 'In the world of atoms, the law of causality has definitely failed.'

Generally speaking we could say that evolution of Physics and Chemistry in the Twentieth century has changed our conception of the world, from an inert representation to an all-moving, manifested non-manifested reality. In another scientific field, modern Biology is giving us a similar picture, by erasing the mechanistic formulas of Nineteenth century biology.

Present enquiry into the phenomena of Life has not only shown the error of the deterministic beliefs and dogmas of the past but has also pointed out that such phenomena do not necessarily conform to the rules of common logic and experience. For the phenomenon of Life is a particular phenomenon with its own particular laws and working beyond the limits of common sense and rationality. It is an irrational — or better — a supra-rational phenomenon.

We have signalised the milestones of the recent progress of European scientific thought. Having done so, however, we should not hasten to proclaim that a new era has been established. Vast new territories have been won to Science, perhaps the Promised Land, but it is empty as yet and the cities of the future have still to be built. Certainly the glittering mansions of Nineteenth century rationalism, materialism and positivism have been abandoned in the forward march of Science, and left behind to crumble into dust. But the structures of the future have yet to take shape.

Transition from one period to another however, is both a difficult and a painful process. It involves a profound spiritual acceptance of the new, a complete integration — not a superficial and passive agreement. The residues of the past are numerous and weighty and they cannot be easily and lightly cast aside.

Today's transition is probably the hardest and most dramatic Europe has had to undergo in all its turbulent history of endeavour and strife on the intellectual and spiritual planes. A complete and radical change is urgently being called for in our traditional values and in our time-honoured categories of thought and experience.

And we feel that unless this transformation is achieved there may be but little hope for our ultimate survival.

Let us consider the situation. When time and space are taken as one unit, when the logical exclusive statement 'This or the other' becomes 'This as well as the other', when the organism is no longer a machine but the result of 'potentialities' transcending causality, when the object cannot be truly separated from the subject, when matter is and is not mass, when life itself is shown to be a non-rational phenomenon — it is clear that our traditional instruments of Western reasoning and understanding can neither keep pace, nor suffice.

There was a time when we could live, serene, and credulous, on the deterministic and rational plane. Our traditional logic was adequate and valid then. But things started to change when Man's mind transcended, in scientific experience, the realm of classical rationality.

To-day there is another factor — an urgent one — which we must also consider. Modern science has become part of our way of life, in all its expressions, and we can no more ignore it than deliberately condemn ourselves to ultimate extinction. The discoveries of Science have certainly altered our daily lives, but many of its revelations are now touching upon the very base of our existence. Also, in its new domains, science is meeting Philosophy and even Religion, and will soon claim *condominium*.

The problems of re-adjustment confront to-day not only the ordinary man who finds that he must detach himself from the old model of understanding and attach himself to the new, but also our scientists who show more awareness than any of us. These same problems have prompted Heisenberg to declare that today's physics need another way of comprehension, and he does not exclude the possibility that the Far East may provide it, because the Indians and the Japanese are alien to the sharp, cold rationalism of Europe.

With the appearance of Swami Vivekananda, Europe perhaps began to be more aware of the fact that although India could teach neither social reform nor mechanical improvements, she had the authority to teach something infinitely more important — namely, the highest truths of the mind, of the heart and of the soul of man, which no time, no place and no cause can contradict.

Vivekananda had seen that the time was ripe for that ancient Truth, an Indian heritage born and handed down long ago from the spiritual realism, to be revealed to all . . . 'It shall no more be a Rahasya, a secret, it shall no more live with monks in caves and forests and the Himalayas, but (it shall) become the common property of all.' And like a Prometheus, Vivekananda brings the flame of truth 'from heaven to earth' even to the very centre of life's mundane activities and worldly preoccupations.

Vivekananda was soon to recognize the undeniable qualities of the West and also its evident shortcomings. He would often praise the former but he would point out the defects with fearless candour and with acute perception. For example, condemning the utilitarian standards of the time, he used to exclaim, 'In these days, we have to measure everything by utility . . . What right has a person to ask that truth should be judged by the standard of utility or money? Suppose there is no utility, will it be less true?' He found the utilitarian mentality primitive and childish, and he would rebuke in these scoffing words : 'Babies judge the whole universe from their own standpoint, that of producing gingerbread, and so do the babies of the world. Sad to say, at the latter end of the Nineteenth century, that these are passing for the learned, the most rational, the most logical, the most intelligent ever seen on this earth.'

On another occasion when singling out the ineptitude of the mechanistic and harshly rational attitude to life which prevailed, Swami Vivekananda remonstrated : 'Devils are machines of darkness, angels are machines of light. But both are machines. Man alone is alive. Break the machine, strike the balance and then man can become free.'

Vivekananda saw in science a limitless field for exploration where we walk step by step, pausing from time to time, and then 'return with freshened energy.'

Against the foolish boasts of that period proclaiming science to have reached the pinnacle of its development, he was convinced that science was but at the threshold of its discoveries. Himself aware of the scientific problems of his day, he often tried to show that most important task of science was to break down the walls of crude rationality inside which it had imprisoned itself, and to get out into the open vistas of free and unprejudiced inquiry.

In Vivekananda's time science in Europe had only just discovered that the various kinds of energies differently known as electricity, heat, magnetism and so forth were convertible into a single energy unit which could express them all. Vivekananda welcomed this discovery and pointed out that it could be found in the old Indian texts with the theory of Prāṇa and Ākāsha. And yet, he noted, there was still a sharp dualism in science, between the unit of force (energy) and that of matter. He was asking : 'Is there any unity to be found among them ? Can they be melted into one?' Our modern science, he would add, 'is mute here. It has not found the way out.' But he foresaw that having now discovered the unity of energy, science would soon discover the unity of matter and energy. This, of course, is precisely what the Twentieth century science did discover.

Considering the notion of time, Vivekananda would often repeat that time is only one way of thinking. In truth — 'all time is in us, we are not in time.' He also said, 'Time, space and causation cannot be said to be independent existences' . . . 'The present has no existence apart from the past and the future. It is all one complete whole, the idea of time being imposed upon us by the form of our understanding.'

In order to make it possible for us to approach a different plane of comprehension, Swami Vivekananda saw as a first step for us a radical change in our way of thinking. He would explain that the mind had to yield, for example, to the apparent contradiction of 'it is and it is not.' Speaking on the theory of Māyā he would show the process of a more essential logic than that of exclusiveness and determinism — in fact, the logic of Advaita Vedanta.

Science in the Twentieth century, as we have noted, was soon compelled to accept the seemingly contradictory statements as synthetically logical, and to give place to non-exclusive statements. In practice our old logic is already receiving in the hands of Science the overhaul which it so urgently needed.

In conclusion, Vivekananda came to the West to attest the strength and the significance of life's non-manifested power. His presence among us was like a guiding beacon of power and of light, which a benevolent providence had seen fit to send us. He showed us the way to a broader reality, away from the suffocating workshops of the Machine.

There is a question, however, that may be asked by Indians and Europeans alike. 'Vivekananda was a sage and a religious personality. How is it possible for anyone to place him in the framework of modern science ?'

To India, one would reply with a statement Vivekananda himself made — 'Advaita Vedanta is the most scientific religion' — and also by quoting his prophecy that science and religion would meet and shake hands one day.

For the benefit of the European, one would recall the words of Spengler, abstraction being made, if one should so wish, of his noted historical pessimism: 'Every science, the slow rise of which coincides with the end of a civilisation, is but a confirmation of very old religious and metaphysical teachings under a new guise.'

THE WORSHIP SUPREME

R. RAMAKRISHNAN

There is God, and there is man. And man needs must worship God. Worship of God is a constitutional necessity for him. Under the pressure of perverse thinking or of lack of soul-energy he may ignore or deny God for a time, but sooner or later he must return to God. Atheism is a passing mood, it is not ingrained in human nature. The worship of the Divine is the supreme vocation man is capable of. It is at the time of this worship that man is at his highest and noblest. The worshipping man is eager to bring unto his God the Beloved all the best he can command. He brings to the act of worship the purest atmosphere, the most inspiring environment, the chastest mood, the most elevated attitude, the deepest concentration, fragrant flowers, sweet incense, delicious offerings, holy water, bright light, bell, conch, chowrie and other things suggestive of honour, respect, adoration. It is said of Śabari in the *Ramayana* that everything good she came by, she reserved and preserved for Rama whom she expected to meet some day. Such is the nature of the devotee. To the human worshipper of God, God is very very human. The worshipper likes to bathe God, clothe God, decorate God, feed God. Not that the devotee does not know that God is above all these needs, but he finds delight in doing all these unto God. And God readily lends Himself to be bathed and fed. Such is God's reaction to the devotee's eagerness to nourish and to caress God. The child Krishna was the very incarnation of beauty, but Yaśoda found endless delight in decorating Him with flowers and feathers. Krishna was the Lord of Dwaraka (and even of the universe) but the poor stuff of parched and flattened rice brought to Him by Kuchela pleased Him as nothing else did. And He devoured it with gusto making each mouthful of it the source of a great favour unto Kuchela. Nothing therefore pleases God so much as devout worship, and nothing pleases man also so much as ardent worshipping.

But while all worship is sacred and acceptable to God, and elevating and efficacious to man, there are grades of worship. That in which the worshipper is engrossed in things outside of himself is the lowest form, though it is on that account in no sense invalid or unacceptable. The more the worshipper dives deep into himself and is less and less busy with things which keep him at the level of the extrovert, the better is the worship. But this introvert form of worship depends for its successful functioning on the attainment of a certain degree of mental maturity. As the worshipper ascends in the spiritual level, he more and more drops external aids, and rests content with contemplating and meditating. At the ultimate level the worshipper loses all sense of distinction between himself and the Object of his worship; and man is at one with God. At the earliest stage God is a distant He; after a time God becomes the person ever in front, the near and dear to you, at the last stage God becomes the I, the subjective Self. At this last stage no worship in the ordinary sense is possible, because there are no two; worship then ripens into and consummates in Self-awareness and Self-bliss. But it is good to remember that most of us are beginners in the realm of spirituality, even if we are intellectuals of a high order; intellectual refinement is not necessarily spiritual ripeness. To one who has reached the loftiest stage the earlier forms of worship may appear to be as crude and senseless as the lispings of a child are to a master of pronunciation, who may tolerate and even enjoy the child's imperfect utterances, but can never attribute perfection to them. The first step of a ladder is very useful and necessary, but it is far away down from the upper storey. If God is the only substance that exists, if He is omnipotent, all-pervading and eternal, if He is the One and the All, the Immutable and the Perfect, how indeed can little man add to His glory by any act of worship or adoration? Do beggars' gifts ever add to the richness of the king's treasure? Is a tiny stream to pride itself on the assumption that its slender waters are going to contribute to the fullness of the ocean's immensity? Can an *ashṭottaraśatha nāmāvali* (a garland of 108 names) or even a *sahasranāma* (a thousand names) exhaust the glories of God — from whom speech and mind return baffled in their attempt to reach Him?

An old poem in Sanskrit brings out in bold relief this idea of the ultimate meaninglessness of any ritualistic worship of God. It is said of a certain spiritual aspirant of old that he went to the deep forest in search of a sage from whom he could learn all about God. He met a sage and begged him for a full description of God's glory. The sage made no answer and remained silent. The enquirer waited and waited, and losing all patience demanded an answer from the sage. The sage smiled and explained, 'All this while, my friend, I have been only answering your question. For silence is the only way of cataloguing God's glories.' This poem has been composed in this spirit. Its author is not known, and this is in keeping with the Indian tradition of honouring what is said than by him whom it is said. The poem is a short one of six couplets, but conveys the idea it sets about to convey in an impressive way. Here are the verses in original followed by a free rendering in English.

परा पूजा

पूर्णस्यावाहनं कुत्र सर्वाधारस्य चासनम् ।
स्वच्छस्य पाद्यमर्घ्यं च शुद्धस्याचमनं कुतः ॥ १ ॥

निर्मलस्य कुतः स्नानं वस्त्रं विश्वोदरस्य च ।
निरालंबस्योपवीतं पुष्पं निर्वासनस्य च ॥ २ ॥

निर्लेपस्य कुतो गंधो रम्यस्याभरणं कुतः ।
नित्यतृप्तस्य नैवेद्यस्तांबूलं च कुतो विभोः ॥ ३ ॥

प्रदक्षिणा ह्यनंतस्य ह्यद्वयस्य कुतो नतिः ।
वेदवाक्यैरवेद्यस्य कुतः स्तोत्रं विधीयते ॥ ४ ॥

स्वयंप्रकाशमानस्य कुतो नीराजनं विभोः।
अन्तर्बहिश्च पूर्णस्य कथमुद्वासनं भवेत् ॥ ५ ॥

एवमेव परापूजा सर्वावस्थासु सर्वदा ।
एकबुद्ध्या तु देवेश विधेया ब्रह्मवित्तमैः ॥ ६ ॥

'Of That which is Full, how is invoking possible? To That which is the Basis of all, how indeed can a seat be provided? To That which is Clear, what for is the water for purificatory washing of feet, and the respectful offering? To One who is Pure, what need is there for the water to be sipped from the palm as an act of cleansing? To One who is Dirtless what is bathing for? To Him who holds the universe in the stomach how indeed can a cloth be offered? To One who needs no support, what is the holy thread for? To That which is beyond all fragrance, of what use is flower? To One who is beyond anointing what for is sandal paste? To That which is Beauty where is the need for a jewel? To One who is ever contented, of what worth is food-offering? To the Ruler Supreme, what need is there for the provision of betel, arecanut and spices? Of the Infinite, how is circumambulation possible? To Him who is the non-dual, how is bowing in salutation possible? To One who is not knowable even by the utterances of the Scriptures, how is the prescription of prayer-hymns possible? To the Self-effulgent Ruler Supreme how is the waving of lights necessary? To One who is Full within and without, how is the worshipful dis-invoking possible? In this way indeed the worship supreme unto the Divine Lord is to be done at all stages and for all times and with a unified intellect, by the Superior knowers of the Real Being.'

The traditional worship of the Divine Being or of a holy man consists of the many ceremonial and ritualistic items mentioned in the poem. The import of the poem is that these elaborate items, though inspiring and useful to the beginner in the spiritual field, have necessarily to be dropped when the full consciousness of the real glory of the Worshipped Being dawns in the aspirant. There has been no greater devotee than Hanuman. He is the highest exemplar of *dāsya bhakti*. And it was by assuming the attitude of Hanuman that Sri Ramakrishna reached perfection in this mode of *sādhana*. But it is said of this great *Ramadāsa*, Hanuman, that while he mostly regarded himself as the servant of Rama the Master, he sometimes felt that he was a part of Rama the Whole, and at other times realized that he and Rama were one and inseparable. This sense of identity with the Supreme One which is man's highest destiny and loftiest realization runs through the entire message of Vivekananda and is well brought out in the two stanzas extracted below :

> 'No more is birth, Nor I, nor thou, nor God, nor man. The "I" has All become, the All is "I" and Bliss. Know thou art That.'
>
> (*The Song of the Sannyasin*)

> From dreams awake, from bonds be free !
> Be not afraid — This mystery,
> My shadow, cannot frighten me !
> Know once for all that I am He.
>
> (*The Song of the Free*)

Describing the nature of the philosopher, the Jnana Yogin, Swami Vivekananda says, 'To say that God is the Father or the Mother, the Creator of this Universe, its Protector and Guide, is to him quite inadequate to express Him. To him God is the life of his life, the soul of his soul, God is his own Self. Nothing else remains which is other than God. This is what this Jnana Yoga teaches. It tells man that he is essentially divine. It shows to mankind the real unity of being, and that each one of us is the Lord God Himself, manifested on earth.'

The fundamental requisite of all worship of a Superior Being is Bhakti or devotion. But Śankara in his *Vivekachudamani* boldly defines Bhakti thus :

> "Among things conducive to liberation devotion (Bhakti) alone holds the supreme place. The seeking after one's real nature is designated as devotion. The inquiry into the truth of one's own self is devotion.'

This Self-inquiry is *par excellence* the Worship Supreme.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA—THE WORLD CITIZEN

R. C. S. SARKAR

Swami Vivekananda was a great man, great in many spheres of life, perhaps one of the greatest that the world has ever produced. But I shall confine myself to one aspect of his life only, namely, Swami Vivekananda, the world citizen.

A preliminary question, however, arises : what do we mean by the expression 'world citizen'? Citizenship is essentially a political and legal concept which is normally understood in relation to a State. Broadly speaking, the tie that binds an individual to a State is allegiance and in return the State gives him certain protection and clothes him with certain rights. A State, however, normally consists of people having different languages, different religions, different cultures and differences in many other spheres of life. But, in spite of all these differences, they are bound together by certain bonds of fellowship which may be called 'collective consciousness' or 'a will to live in a community'. This corporate sentiment of peculiar intensity, intimacy and dignity make the people a nation and make them worthy citizens of a State. If we interpret the expression 'world citizen' in a narrow legalistic sense, it implies the existence of a world State. No such State exists and Swami Vivekananda was not a political philosopher who preached the ideal of world State or even of a federation of States. He cannot be regarded as a world citizen in the legal or political sense of the term. If, on the other hand, we interpret the term in a larger context, it means a person who has a bond of fellowship with the rest of mankind and who fosters among the peoples of the world some common bond which binds them together and makes them world-conscious. I shall endeavour to show from the life and teachings of Swami Vivekananda that in this larger context, he was one of the greatest world-citizens and that he has done more than anybody else to lay the foundation of world-citizenship and to build what Romain Rolland calls the city of mankind. The philosophy of his life and teachings had a universal appeal and he tried to foster among the people of the world a common bond of fellowship and universal brotherhood and a collective consciousness for world citizenship. He belongs not only to India but to the whole world.

The two aspects of his life which entitle Vivekananda to an eminent place among world citizens is his faith in the fundamental unity of mankind and his deep and intense love for humanity. We are separated today from each other on account of barriers of nation, race, culture, religion, customs, manners, dresses, languages and even in our mental outlook. In spite of all these differences, Vivekananda emphasized over and over again that there is a fundamental unity which binds men, men all over the globe. It was almost an article of faith with him. Unity for him was a magic word which would cure many of the ills of the present day world. He did not try to bring about any superficial political unity which may break whenever there is a clash of interests, but he conceived of a unity which is based on more fundamental considerations. I want, however, to make it clear at this stage that for Vivekananda unity does not mean uniformity. Uniformity spells death. He rejoiced in diversity of religions and ideas and believed in unity in diversity which is the tradition of Indian culture. The unity which Vivekananda conceived was based on three fundamental concepts, namely, (i) his faith in the divinity inherent in man, (ii) his concept of universal science-religion and (iii) his theory of acceptance. I shall briefly deal with these aspects.

The concept that man is inherently divine is not a new one. It is as old as the Upaniṣads. 'Whatever exists in this universe is to be covered with the Lord.' Swami Vivekananda explained this message of the Upaniṣads with his usual vigour and urged upon us to really see God in everything, in good and evil, and in the victor and the vanquished and realize the essential unity of man. If we really have this realization, causes of hatred between man and man and between nation and nation would vanish. This message has a great practical significance today. We have witnessed two world wars in the present century, and the primary concern of the statesmen of the world today is to ensure peace and harmony among the nations. For this purpose, we have experimented with the League of Nations, but not with much success. We are again experimenting with the United Nations Organisation, but we cannot expect to have lasting peace unless the causes of our fear and suspicion are removed, unless there is a common bond between man and man and unless there is a radical change in the mental outlook of our people. Swami Vivekananda, the saint with a message and a mission, tried to bring about this change in our mental outlook by emphasizing on the concept of the universal brotherhood based on divinity in man and thus laid the foundation of world citizenship.

The mission of his life was to unite, to bring about unity between man and man, and between nation and nation. This he sought to achieve by the unifying force of religious and spiritual ties. In order that religion may be a unifying force and not a force for disruption, it must satisfy the needs of all people in all stages of civilization. Vivekananda preached such a religion. Religion for him was synonymous with universalism of the spirit. That Religion is real and living which will come into our very nature, live in our every moment, penetrate into the pores of our society and be infinitely more a power for good than it has ever been before. This is a scientific age in which we want to test everything in the light of reason. Science has thrown out a challenge to religion. Vivekananda accepted the challenge and gave to the world a religion and philosophy which is based on reason and faith. It is the Advaita of India, non-dualism, Unity, the idea of the absolute and impersonal God, the only religion that can have any hold on intellectual people. His concept of a universal religion unites the whole credo of the human spirit, from the enslaved fatalism of the savage to the most liberal creative affirmation of modern science. 'He harmonised them into a magnificent synthesis, which, far from extinguishing the hope of a single one, helped all hopes to grow and flourish according to their own proper nature.' This concept of the universal science-religion which Vivekananda practised and preached contributed very largely to the concept of world citizenship.

If we have understood Vivekananda properly, our watchword should be acceptance and not exclusion — not even toleration which is an insult and blasphemy. We have no right to tolerate another man any more than he has a right to tolerate me. We all have equal rights and equal shares in truth. We are fellow workers and we should fraternise. We must take in all the religions and ideas that have been in the past, enjoy the light of the present and open every window of the heart for all that will come in the future. This principle of acceptance, and not merely of toleration, is the keynote of Vivekananda's life and teachings. It is this principle that lays down the true foundation of world citizenship and peoples of different parts of the world can meet as fellow workers on this basis.

Unity for Vivekananda had a tremendous significance — unity in all spheres and above all unity in thought and action. It has been the tradition of India to defend our age-long heritage with the firm intention not to sacrifice any part of it, but to allow the rest of the world to profit by it, but Vivekananda realized that the time was past for the pre-eminence of one incomplete and partial civilization. The East and the West stand face to face as equals and they must work together for the benefit of mankind. His claim to greatness lies in the fact that he not only proved the importance of unity by reason but stamped it upon the heart of India in flashes of illumination.

The second aspect of his life which I wish to emphasise is his deep and intense love for humanity. This love transcended all barriers of national frontiers, all religions, castes, languages and cultures. This was not merely an empty emotion, but it pervaded the very nature of his life. He not only preached this ideal but practised it in his life and built up an organization to give practical shape to it. His thought and action united and this aspect of his life made him one of the greatest men in living memory.

During his travels all over India with a burning heart seeking for higher realizations, he came face to face with India in all its nakedness, with its teeming millions sunk in poverty and ignorance, a hopelessly enervated and disorganized mass lost to all faith in the future. His heart bled and it made him restless. He realized that it was no good preaching spirituality to starving men and that his mission in life was to give back to his fellow countrymen their lost individuality and make them stand on their own feet with a new life and vigour. To him, even the desire for *mukti* became meaningless. He was gradually travelling towards the synthesis of the Vedanta and the social realization of the present day. Though his mission was clear, he did not know how to achieve it. For he required both men and money for the purpose. He went to America not so much for the Parliament of Religions, but to find more means for the salvation of the poor in India. During his travels in America and Europe, he discovered the people of the West, took them to his heart and found a definite bond of union between the two worlds. The horizon of his vision widened and he dedicated himself to the service of humanity. To the people of the West who were materially more advanced, Swamiji gave the message of spiritual realization and universal love in keeping with their needs. To us in India, he gave not merely a spiritual message but a message of man-making religion and a nation-making faith and resolve.

Swamiji was not content merely with giving a message to humanity but he wanted to translate his thought into action. He realized that this could not be done by the unaided efforts of an individual, however great. He therefore conceived of an organization to give effect to his ideal. In this, he was inspired to a large extent by the organised effort of the West, as well as by the Buddhist organization of ancient India. The organization was 'to serve the double purpose of providing men with the means to attain their own liberation so that they might prepare themselves for the progress of the world and the betterment of its conditions.' He wanted men, men of a high order to carry out his ideals. He gave a clarion call to the Sanyasis to come down from the caves of the Himalayas to the market place to share the joys and sorrows of the common man and to serve him. The need to serve humanity was paramount and Swamiji struck a new path to go along with the purely contemplative faith. He exclaimed, 'What have we done, we so-called men of God, what have we done for the masses? Let the study of Vedanta and practice of meditation be left over to the future life and let this body be dedicated to others.'

Men responded to his clarion call and Swami Vivekananda had around him a band of loyal and devoted workers for disseminating his ideals throughout the world. For his travels and his liberal education had convinced him that the aspirations and needs of humanity at the present time were universally one. These Vedantist missionaries did not consider themselves as God's chosen people to propagate spiritual imperialism but they respected the natural faith of each individual and desired only 'to reawaken the spirit in man, to guide individuals and nations to the conquest of their inner kingdom, by their own ways which were best suited to them. There is nothing in this to which the proudest nationalism can take exception. No nation is asked to forsake its own ways. It is asked rather to develop the God that is in them, to the fullest, highest degree'.*

Vivekananda's concept of service was not confined merely to the propagation of a spiritual message but it embraced a complete programme of social and economic reform. He wanted us to serve in the true spirit of worship and with love and renunciation. In serving people, there should be no discrimination and we should not choose the object of our love. We should serve even our enemies and the wicked or the unfortunate, for their need is the greatest.

I have tried to analyse Vivekananda's concept of service in order to illustrate that his concept was universal in nature and was not restricted to the narrow confines of any country, race or religion. Here I want to utter a word of caution. It would be wrong to suppose that Vivekananda was an internationalist in the accepted sense of the term. An interntionalist generally thinks in terms of the world and its salvation only and, incidentally, tries to help his own country as a part of the world organization. That was not the approach of Vivekananda. His approach was the other way round. He was intensely patriotic and working for his own country. In his famous lecture on 'My plan of campaign' he stated his ideal of patriotism and we see how he felt deeply for his own flesh and blood sinking every day. You cannot, however, serve your country unless you think of the world. It is in this context that he thought of the world and spread his activities in all parts of the world. There is no conflict between nationalism and internationalism. Conflict arises only when we take a perverted view of nationalism and patriotism. We must understand very clearly that Swamiji was working for the salvation of his own country. That was his prime concern. In order to achieve that purpose it was necessary for him to serve humanity at large. In his scheme of things, there is no conflict between the service of his country and the service of the world, rather they must go together.

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* *The Life of Vivekananda* by Romain Rolland.

In order to appreciate the part played by Vivekananda in the role of a world citizen, I have emphasized two aspects of his life — his faith in the fundamental unity of mankind and his service to humanity. The questions of world citizenship and world State are no longer of academic interest, but it has assumed practical importance in order to prevent total annihilation of the world and to preserve our culture, civilisation and everything that we hold dear. We are naturally looking at the question from a political point of view and are thinking in terms of international law and international organization. Prejudices, fear, suspicion and self-interest stand in the way of realization of our ideal. We must find some common tie based on fundamental values of human life that binds man and man. Swami Vivekananda sought to supply the bond by emphasizing on unity — unity based on universal science-religion, divinity inherent in man and his principle of the theory of acceptance. His constructive genius may be summed up in two words: equilibrium and synthesis. Unity and harmony were his watchwords. Vivekananda had seen their realization in the harmonious personality of Sri Ramakrishna and wished this harmony to be extended to the whole of India and to the world. Therein lies his courage and originality.

Swami Vivekananda emphasised on the fundamental unity of man and set out to build the city of mankind on the foundation of this golden concrete.

He had not only to build the city but also the souls of its inhabitants to make them worthy citizens of this great city of mankind. He wanted to achieve this purpose by service to humanity. He avoided the disruptive political forces and concentrated on spiritual, economic and social reforms. He was a worker at foundations, as Sister Nivedita would say. He neither used the word 'nationality' nor proclaimed an era of nation-making. Man-making was his task. The period of his activity was brief, barely 16 years between Ramakrishna's death and his own demise. During this short period, he not only laid the foundation of world citizenship and of a city of mankind, but was able to rouse world consciousness among men and women all over the world. He stirred the hearts of men and women in the East as well as in the West and his success was unprecedented. During the short span of his activities, he could not, however, complete his task. Gandhi, Aurobindo and Rabindra Nath followed this idea in their own ways, but the goal is yet to be reached. The world citizenship is still a distant goal and it is for us and his followers to give practical shape to this ideal. If we have not yet completed his unfinished task, the fault lies not in the teachings of Swami Vivekananda, but in us. The fire that was lit by Swami Vivekananda is still alight today, and I have every hope and faith that a new consciousness will arise from this fire which will make world citizenship a reality. I pay my homage to the saint with a prophetic vision who laid the foundation of world citizenship and gave to us the right approach to achieve this ideal.

The world is God's epistle to mankind — his thoughts are flashing upon us from every direction.

— PLATO

* * *

Oh, what a glory doth this world put on, for him who with a fervent heart goes forth under the bright and glorious sky, and looks on duties well performed, and days well spent.

— LONGFELLOW

THE IDEAL OF SERVICE AS EXPOUNDED BY SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

T. S. DEVADOSS

I

The noblest tribute that we can humbly pay to the great Swami Vivekananda is to understand and imbibe his teachings and that of Sri Ramakrishna, his spiritual guru and put them into practice in our daily life by dedicating ourselves to the service of our fellow beings. The service of the poor, the ignorant, the sick and the down-trodden—'Of God among the wretched' (Daridra-Narāyana) as Swami Vivekananda puts it, is the first duty of man. He emphatically declares : 'National ideals of India are renunciation and service. Intensify her in those channels and the rest will take care of itself.' Mahātmā Gāndhi taught the same to the teeming millions of Indian people who were unconscious of the Tamasik state they were in, and made them come out of it and realize in their own lives the power of Vedanta which upholds the right of all to *tattwa-Jñāna* (knowledge of the spirit). Swami Vivekananda visualized that the truth, *tattwa-jñāna,* which had no place in our everyday relationship with our fellow-beings was useless and inane.

II

To our age which has become overburdened with matter, Sri Ramakrishna imparted the message of the supremacy of spirit. Swami Vivekananda was concerned not only for the spiritual progress of all but also for the material well-being. He recalled his master's words : 'Religion is not for empty bellies' and dedicated himself to the task of rousing the world conscience so that India could be saved from her plight. He therefore conceived of a programme of service with the twin-ideal of self perfection and commonweal (*loka samgraha*). He believed that, through sheer selfless and disinterested service a person can reach the supreme goal coveted by the wise.

Swami Vivekananda received his flaming passion for service and power of synthesis from his holy Master. He cried out in a passion of anguish : 'May I be born again and again and suffer a thousand miseries so that I may worship the only God in whom I believe, the sum total of all souls, and above all my God the wicked, my God the miserable, my God the poor of all races'. Surely the men of God do not live only for themselves, they seek the welfare of all. The great ones like the Buddha, Sri Ramakrishna, Swami Vivekananda were always concerned about the welfare of all. According to one view, no single individual soul is finally released until all souls are released. There is said to be a class of *muktas* (released souls) called *ādhikarika muktas* whose sole purpose in retaining, even after release, their apparent individuality is to help other souls gain their release. Swami Vivekananda was one such great soul.

III

Man lives best when he dedicates his life for humanity. It is the most heroic feature of a man's life to forgive those who have put him on the cross and thus obey the Divine law of sacrifice and renunciation. How are we to develop the spirit of sacrifice and renunciation in practical life ? Well, we can do it when we see the deeper ultimate purpose behind all our activities and read their spiritual meaning. Work has no meaning unless it teaches us balance and gradually leads us inward and helps us to develop introspection. Religion in its universal significance teaches man to regain his lost freedom and divine heritage.

IV

In the *Bhagavad-Gītā*, Lord Kṛṣṇa teaches Arjuna that one ought to work for commonweal (*loka samgraha*). 'You have a right to work alone, and not to the fruit thereof,' says Bhagavan Kṛṣṇa in the *Gita*. 'Let not the fruit of action be your object, nor let your attachment be to inaction,' is also the essence of the principle of Karma Yoga as taught to us in the *Bhagavad-Gītā*. Renunciation is to be practised not towards work but to the fruits of work. The *Gita* calls upon everyone to regard work as worship of God — '*swakarmaṇā tamabhyarchya siddhim vindati mānavaḥ*'. A man attains the goal of supreme bliss by worshipping God by doing his own work. Not by Karma, not by progeny or wealth but by *tyāga* or relinquishment is release obtained — *na karmaṇā na prajayā na dhanena tyāgenaike amṛtatvam ānaśuḥ*. Total annihilation of the feeling of *sva* (mine) is absolutely necessary for spiritualization of service. The opening verse of the *Īśa Upaniṣad* reminds us that in this world of objects which is permeated by the Divine, every one of us has to live in it as if he were out of it, guided by a sense of *tyāga* or detachment leading to the attainment of the essence of the spiritual life by his unequivocal insistence on the same principle of detachment. The *tyāga* or self-abnegation, be it noted, does not carry with it, as is often wrongly conceived, an idea of anything like loss (*nāśa*) or unmitigable emptying of the soul reducing it to vacuum, but rather it suggests the attainment of the fullest stature it is capable of. It is not destruction but re-fulfilment, not vacuum but plenitude. It is the veering back of the soul to its own moorings; it is thus negative only in appearance, but supremely positive in its essence; and this is the inner significance of the life of detachment or renunciation, whatever you may call it.

Similarly, service to man, according to Swamiji, discharged in a spirit of detachment or divine service can never be regarded as a snare, because this type of work is not for one's own happiness (*svakalyana-buddhiḥ*). Service can be synthesized with knowledge even from the Advaitic point of view, if by service, we mean only those actions which are perpetuated by the wise for *lokasamgraha*. Action does not become his duty in the sense that they are obligatory on him. On the other hand, any humanitarian service done by the wise is a spontaneous manifestation, in a dynamic form, of the nectar of wisdom that he has drunk. He becomes the master of all actions by cultivating detachment and faith in the Absolute. It is the Absolute, the Self that serves as his light (*ātmaivāsya jyotir bhavati*). The freed soul works for the guidance of men who are still immersed in ignorance (*avidyā*). He is the doer of the work and is yet not the doer, because he has no sense of 'I' and 'mine' as taught to us not only by Rishis but carried to its fullest extent in our daily life by Swami Vivekananda.

The essence of Karma-yoga according to Swamiji is the annihilation of *ahaṁkāra* and the attunement of one's being to the purpose of divine life. Service in a detached spirit is the outerside of spirituality and knowledge is the inner side. The very subtle metaphysical distinction between the self-effacement of *niṣkāma-karma* and the self-negation of *Brahma-jñāna* loses its meaning when viewed from the stand point of psychology and practical life. Hence, in the opinion of Swami Vivekananda, one who is able to realize the Advaita-tattva, feels an urge to make sincere endeavour, with a view to awaken that realization in others. To realize the oneness of all souls through disinterested service to humanity is what Swamiji has called practical Vedānta.

V

Romain Rolland observes: 'In the two words, equilibrium and synthesis, Swami Vivekananda's constructive genius may be summed up. He embraced all the paths of the spirit; the four yogas in their entirety, renunciation and service, art and science, religion and action from the most spiritual to the most practical.'

What then is the practical way of achieving this consciousness? It is by reverentially serving all as God — nothing less. Says Swamiji, 'First let us be Gods, and then, help others to be Gods. Be and make — let this be our motto.' Call no man a sinner, even if he be. 'If all be Gods, then, evidently the service of all is the worship of God.' The man who shows love to all kinds of life, he indeed serves God.

The universality of this noble sentiment is attested by these lines of Coleridge, the English poet, which seem to be an echo of the Vaishnava doctrine : viz. *nāmé ruchi, jivé dayā*

> 'He prayeth best who loveth best
> All things both great and small'.

Here is the message of Mahātma Gāndhi : 'I ask you, young men and women of Bharata Desa, not to go away empty-handed without imbibing something of the spirit of the place where Swami Vivekananda lived. Behold! Vivekananda still lives in the soul of his Mother, and in the soul of her children!'

Salutation to that King of renouncers and controller of passions, the sage Vivekananda who is *Sat-cit-ananda,* itself, the spiritual preceptor, the remover of all distress. May he awaken our understanding and help us to constantly seek and work for the welfare of humanity. Let this be our motto : First idealize the real; then realize the ideal.

REASON AND INTUITION

KAMAKSHI DASA R. SOMASUNDARAM AIYAR

In this vast universe consisting of myriads of stars, suns, moons, planets and other huge heavenly bodies, our Earth itself is only a geometrical point, so to speak. While so, what is man? He is a tiny speck in space. His status in *Space* is Zero.

As regards *Time* man's duration of life is really a lightning flash compared with the duration of the universe. Because the earth rotates round its axis and revolves round the sun, and the moon revolves round the earth, man divides his life's duration conveniently into years, months and days. Really speaking it is not even a Solomon Grundy business — of being born on Monday, Christened on Tuesday, married on Wednesday, getting ill on Thursday, worsening on Friday, dying on Saturday and being buried on Sunday. It is really a case of being born this instant and dying in the next. Man's status in time is another zero.

As regards *causation,* poor man knows nothing. He knows that tree comes from seed and seed from tree but which came first he does not know. Several effects he comes across for which he knows not the cause. Here also his status is a big zero.

As regards his *Existence,* it is very precarious and absolutely dependent. He lives under the mercy of the Elements. If Nature frowns a little he is nowhere. A few more degrees of heat or cold he cannot withstand. He lives under constant dread of floods, storms, earthquakes, lightning, plagues, epidemics etc. For his very existence he depends upon the external air, water, food and other things. Moreover he is ever treated with contempt. Things take place under his very nose, around him and even in his own body not only without consulting him in the least but also in utter disregard and contempt of him and he has to be a helpless on-looker.

Even during this short, precarious and absolutely dependent existence he is suffering under *great limitations* on all sides. He is limited in his mind, intellect and the five senses. After intense thinking the mind sometimes becomes a blank. After an intellectual pursuit of great intensity his brain fags. As regards the five senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch, some animals and birds and insects excel him and often beat him hollow. Even in the matter of satisfying the primary common wants of

IV

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As regards *Time* man's duration of life is really a lightning flash compared with the duration of the universe. Because the earth rotates round its axis and revolves round the sun, and the moon revolves round the earth, man divides his life's duration conveniently into years, months and days. Really speaking it is not even a Solomon Grundy business — of being born on Monday, Christened on Tuesday, married on Wednesday, getting ill on Thursday, worsening on Friday, dying on Saturday and being buried on Sunday. It is really a case of being born this instant and dying in the next. Man's status in time is another zero.

As regards *causation*, poor man knows nothing. He knows that tree comes from seed and seed from tree but which came first he does not know. Several effects he comes across for which he knows not the cause. Here also his status is a big zero.

As regards his *Existence*, it is very precarious and absolutely dependent. He lives under the mercy of the Elements. If Nature frowns a little he is nowhere. A few more degrees of heat or cold he cannot withstand. He lives under constant dread of floods, storms, earthquakes, lightning, plagues, epidemics etc. For his very existence he depends upon the external air, water, food and other things. Moreover he is ever treated with contempt. Things take place under his very nose, around him and even in his own body not only without consulting him in the least but also in utter disregard and contempt of him and he has to be a helpless on-looker.

Even during this short, precarious and absolutely dependent existence he is suffering under *great limitations* on all sides. He is limited in his mind, intellect and the five senses. After intense thinking the mind sometimes becomes a blank. After an intellectual pursuit of great intensity his brain fags. As regards the five senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch, some animals and birds and insects excel him and often beat him hollow. Even in the matter of satisfying the primary common wants of hunger they have cleverer, easier and more straightforward methods than man. As regards mind and intellect, which they also have, we are not really in a position to compare man with them as we do not know fully theirs. But because of his powers of gathering knowledge, reasoning, planning and his capacity to know the truth about himself, the world and the absolute reality, we have to take man as superior to the rest of the creation.

Again, his ignorance is colossal. He does not know anything about several matters such as life, mind, intellect, senses, world, etc. — as to how they are produced, who produced them and so on and so forth.

To remove his ignorance about things of the world he makes honest efforts. Day in and day out the scientists are engaged in pursuit of knowledge about the constitution of matter and about the how and why of things in the world, reasoning on facts observed in the world of space, time and causation. For solving things of the world, for purpose of the world, his pursuit is legitimate and reasoning is properly applied. But the difficulty arises when man wants to apply his reasoning faculty to transcendental matters, of spirit, which is beyond space, time and causation. He uses facts and the relationship of cause-effect, truth-error, appearance-Reality etc., observed in the world with his limited mind and intellect and brings out various philosophies by razor-sharp reasoning and dizzy dialectics regarding the Absolute, the Great Unknown. In short, he wants to measure the sky with a yard stick. These philosophies however ingenious and produced by whatsoever master mind can never be scientific at all since they are based on knowledge of material facts and observations made with defective and limited instruments in the world of space, time and causation. They are mere speculations of fertile brains and being such, a keener intellect is always found to shatter a previously imagined unassailable philosophy. We have come across books which have, by acute reasoning, successfully questioned and beaten hollow every philosophy hitherto produced in East or West. Thus several schools of thought have arisen in religious and spiritual matters to the utter bewilderment of an earnest seeker after truth. The mischief done by some of these philosophies and schools of thought is immense. Instead of integrating humanity which must be the true aim of a sound philosophy several sections of humanity are perpetually warring with each other. Much blood has been spilt in the world in the name of Religion. Each sect insists that its philosophy is divinely inspired and even if its main tenets are opposed to common-sense and can be bettered by reason, re-thinking is not allowed and is considered positively sacrilegious! Even in the field of science which deals with known verifiable facts Newton's theory is allowed to give way to Einstein's but re-thinking is not allowed in speculative philosophies! Every school has its own Tatwas or categories and claims the same as real and final. As stated above these philosophies are defective since they are based on facts and relationship observed in the world with the sense of space, time and causation which itself is a product of limited vision.

Let us see how space-sense arises: Because of limited vision we see separateness of objects. Suppose we have deeper than X-ray vision in our eyes, then separateness of objects will vanish and all will be a void. For a blind man also it will be the same, though he can imagine by feeling things. The keenest vision will probably see one vast mass of atoms only. Time-sense arises out of observations of changes of objects seen in the world including our body. Hence it depends practically on space-sense. Sense of causation also arises only from space-sense. From the sense of space, time and causation produced by limited vision no real philosophy can be built. Such philosophies can only be termed as researches in ignorance.

That reasoning can never be a safe guide will also be clear from the fact that it takes account of the waking state experience only and argues as if it is perfect. It omits altogether a consideration of the dream and deep sleep states of man. These philosophies take for granted that dream experiences are false and that ignorance alone prevails in deep sleep and so these states need not be considered at all. The omission to consider these important states is a major blunder and hence such philosophies may safely be ignored. We shall presently consider how these two states are even more important than the waking state and how an analysis of them alone can make any philosophy complete.

These reason-based philosophies differ from one another in the very conception of what mind is and how it functions. Some hold mind to be spirit and some as matter. This is on the assumption that spirit and matter are two different things. The Upanishads of the Hindus state clearly that Brahman or spirit alone exists without a second and all that exists is spirit only. Modern science seems also to incline to that view.

Now let us take the three states of man. In the waking state the mind sees and experiences the world with its limited five senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. It works under the handicap of all round limitations including that of the physical body. Naturally the experience is limited and partial. The mind is not able to shine in its full scope.

But in dream-state the mind has full scope. It shows its great powers. It is not under any limitations as in the waking state. It temporarily casts off this unwieldy physical body and creates a new, agile, mobile, feather-weight body which can fly in space also if need be defying earth's gravity and furnishes that body with ego, mind, intellect and five senses and creates for its enjoyment a world of men, beasts, birds, mountains, rivers, sky, stars, sun, moon and other things seen in this world and sometimes a world more wonderful than that of the waking world. It experiences ordinarily those things usually met with in this world, but sometimes newer and nobler things also. That newly created dream body has in turn its own waking, dreaming and deep-sleep states—and dream within a dream often takes place. In the dream-state mind experiences pain and pleasure with equal intensity as in the waking state. Dreams have foretold many events and have led to discovery of many things which were not known in waking state. Dreams have produced more potent and abiding experiences in saints and holy men than even waking state. In fact in dreams more Karmas are worked out for holy men than in the waking state. Barring remembrance of waking state experiences and mere imaginations of mind which take place both in the waking and dream states there is still an exclusive and important residue in dream state which is the work of mind in its higher state. As far as mind is concerned this is really a superior state. Nobody has as yet given a cogent or intelligible explanation of this wonderful phenomenon of dream where newer and nobler experiences than that obtained in the waking state are gained. Several philosophers simply brush aside the dream experience as false and proceed victoriously in their reasoning. They hold that since the dream world is negated in waking state and since objects of the waking world are more enduring and verified by others also, dream must be false. Probably if dream extended for years and waking state endured only for a few hours they may hold waking state to be false. Hence time sense alone seems to distinguish them. But time sense arises from space sense and space sense depends upon our limited vision as we found already. So we have no sure foundation or basis to hold dream to be false. If negation is the test then waking state is negated in dream state and both are negated in deep sleep state and hence all states should be false and philosophers are not wanting who hold so. It goes without saying that their philosophies also must be false.

In deep sleep state some philosophers think that the mind is absent and it suffers from ignorance. On the other hand it attains a more perfect state — a state where its worldliness vanishes, its ego vanishes, intellect vanishes and all diversity vanish and there is bliss. The mind is not unconscious. It is all consciousness, without the sense of ego and the false or limited sense of space, time and causation leading to sense of diversity which is the cause of all unhappiness and devoid of such relationship of pairs like good-bad, truth-falsehood, etc. seen in the world of the waking state. The waking world sun or moon does not shine in that state. The mind rids itself of all pairs of opposites in the world which produce unhappiness and all other shackles of limitations and enjoys bliss. In deep sleep the sinner is no sinner, the robber is no robber and the king no king. Every thing is bliss only. We will deal with this a little more in the later portions. Suffice it to say here that these two glorious states of the mind have been grievously overlooked by these philosophies. Reason returns ashamed and discomfited from these two realms. Reason is therefore inadequate and unfit to know the transcendental Absolute.

Are we then led to agnosticism? Is there no way to know the truth about oneself, the world and the Absolute? Should man perish, without knowing the truth? Should man's purpose in life remain for ever unaccomplished?

Fortunately there is plenty of hope for man. There is a golden path leading to the knowledge of *That* by knowing which you know all. It is not reasoning of course. You get that knowledge by what is called *Intuition.* The same mind which furnishes you with intellect for reasoning, furnishes you with intuition when the mind is in its pure concentrated state, untainted by ego, intellect and the senses that wallow in the world. The ancient sages had this faculty in a remarkable degree and through their intuition they saw the truths of the Vedas. Any ardent seeker after truth can have it, provided he works for it.

This intuition is not a myth. It is as much a fact as magnetism or electricity which though invisible can be harnessed for services of man. This intuition also though invisible can be produced and harnessed for services of man. From an aspect of this arises divinely inspired poetry. It produces genius in any field. In fact all phenomena which reason cannot resolve can be traced to that only. Though reason looks small before it, yet the truths declared by intuition will conform to reason as far as it can go. The truths declared by saints through intuition all over the world are more or less the same. They are also universal and applicable to all humanity. Truths of intuition can never be replaced by reason or bettered by explanations. But the statements of these saints, regarding the phenomenal world may not be exact. They may even be contrary to scientifically established truths. Such statements should surely be separated and there is no use of dying hard to find out explanations or to clothe them with unwarranted sanctity and mystery. That is trying to take out fibre from out of stones. This die-hard mentality has produced several schools of thought and incidental mischiefs. It is profitable to note here that the founders of religions themselves did not write its sacred books but the followers compiled them several centuries later. To separate the truths from statements made in the worldly sphere in any holy book itself requires intuition.

As stated above the Upanishads are records of the revelations of Rishis or sages, who lived away from the madding crowd withdrawing their senses from worldliness and concentrating their mind in the region of their hearts. Truth in every field, including science, can be obtained only by withdrawing from worldliness and by concentrating the mind on the subject chosen. The Upanishads clearly state that there is only one intelligent principle or spirit called Brahman, which alone exists without a second. It is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent, and all that is in this universe whether movable or immovable is that Brahman only. When spoken of in its pristine purity it is called the Absolute Reality or Nirguna Brahman when spoken of in connection with the world it is Saguna Brahman or God or Iśwara and when spoken of in connection with man it is called Ātman. The world comes out of Brahman as sparks from fire, as thread from spider's body, as herbs from Earth, as hairs on the human body. Two things are clear from these simple illustrations (1) That the world is of the same substance as Brahman and (2) that the world is produced from Brahman as naturally as hairs grow from body etc. These simple statements of the Upaniṣads were interpreted in various ways by several commentators with their razor-sharp intellects and head-reeling dialectics with the result that these truths were lost in verbiage and several schools arose to the utter dismay of the seeker after truth.

Leaving for the moment controversial illustrations we shall resort now to an illustration nearer home and exactly to the point in which no controversy is possible. We found that mind in its dream state creates a body, its mind, intellect, its ego, its five senses, and a wonderful world for its enjoyment peopled with men, beasts, birds, insects and having its own space, time and causation. All these creations of the mind in dream are mind-stuff only. They are not different from it. Mind alone then exists in the active state and the dream world came out of it. Why should mind dream? It is in its nature to do so. Similarly the world is Brahman's dream. Why should Brahman dream the world? It is its nature to do so. The mind has inherited its nature to dream from Brahman its parent even as the dream man inherits his power to dream from the parent mind. Except its nature there is no other cause for Brahman to dream the world. The *Mandukya Upaniṣad* which alone is sufficient for an ardent seeker to know the truth, states that Ātman or Brahman has four states (1) The waking state (2) The dream state (3) The deep sleep state and (4) its own true state. The three states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep, are really the dream state of Ātman or Brahman. These three states comprise the whole universe and hence it is Brahman's dream. The Upaniṣads declare without reservation *All this is Brahman* (*Sarvam Khalvidam Brahma*). All things in the past, present and future are Brahman only.

The Upaniṣads further state that from Brahman, the Great Prana or Life-force or Saguna Brahman came into being, that it is Prājna or God of the universe, that it abides in the heart of man with *chit* as its mouth. In man the Ātman or Brahman alone exhibits as prāṇa, mind, intellect, ego, the senses etc. The mind is always held fast by the prāṇa in the heart. The mind itself acts in four ways. (1) As ordinary *mind* it works with ego and intellect and five senses in the world. (2) As *intellect* it determines things and controls the mind running after the senses. (3) As *ego* it appropriates every experience to itself and to its individualised body. And (4) as *chit* (consciousness) it is in its pure state, bereft of ego, intellect and the worldly mind. It is in this pure mind, *chit*, God resides as prāṇa in the heart. That is the kingdom of God. Mind is tethered to prāṇa like a paper kite through a string to the holder, like cattle tethered to a peg and like a child tied to the apron-strings of its mother. In fact the prāṇa acts like a mother to the mind. During the waking state the mind along with ego and intellect and its companions the five senses is allowed to roam about in the world, with the night fall the tether string is shortened and mind is dragged in for sleep by the mother prāṇa which compels the five senses also to take their rest. In dream state the mind is allowed to have free play with itself alone. Then the mind is further drawn by prāṇa to her own apartment the heart and made to have deep sleep on her lap while she keeps eternal vigil over its toys, the individual body and its memories in order to return them on waking. Whether man knows it or not every man enters the kingdom of God in deep sleep and keeps company with God. It must be clearly noted that mind attains this state involuntarily under suppression and compulsion by a superior force which in its effulgence over-powers it and hence mind is not able to bring back any knowledge of that state for its use in the world of waking state. But if the mind works voluntarily, a miracle happens. The mind should voluntarily extricate itself from the worldly objects to which it was attached through the five senses. Then it must extricate itself from its sense of ego — the sense of I and mine — knowing truly that everything is He, who resides in the heart as Prāṇa or God with motherly love; that everything belongs to Him; and that the mind has no business to appropriate anything to itself by bringing into play its ego. Then it must become pure *chitta* in the heart, where God resides and surrender to Him everything. The God in the region of the heart as prāṇa graces the mind with all knowledge and intuition arises. By repeating these disciplines the mind gets surcharged with grace, like an object in a magnetic field is charged by the magnet and intuition becomes its second nature. All knowledge dawns on the mind. The mind can be brought back to its pure state by the method of Yoga or by devotion to God who is in the heart. Method of devotion is easier.

The difference between intuition and intellectual reasoning is this : Intellect works in the brain region whereas intuition arises in the heart region. There is no fagging or sagging in intuition whereas brain may fag. The truths obtained by intuition are universal but those obtained by reason are particular, though some section of humanity may heed to it. Intuition is built on surer and safer foundations whereas reason builds on loose sands with dubious and limited instruments. Intuition having God's grace is permanent but reason being based on human errors is liable to change.

To get out of the troubles of the world man has no other alternative but to concentrate on God within his heart and obtain His grace which gives the much needed intuition also. Let us for a moment revert to the example of the dream. Suppose one of the men we see in dream is beaten by another or is pounced upon by a dream tiger. What should he do to escape from the trouble ? He must appeal to the dreamer and surrender unto him and pray to him to wake up for him and end his troubles. So also we who are caught in the world have to worship God to end our troubles here. When our minds become one with Him he wakes up for us and shows us the resplendent Brahman. We have our being in Brahman, we move in Brahman, and we are hedged in on all sides by Brahman alone.

This Brahman can be concentrated upon by the mind in the region of the heart either as personal God or impersonal Absolute, (i.e.) in its Saguna or Nirguna aspect. But as *Gita* XII (5) states it is very difficult for the embodied being to concentrate on Nirguna Brahman. So it is advisable to concentrate on personal God or as the sound 'Aum' or any other symbol or Mantra in the heart. It may be concentrated upon external objects like the Sun, moon, as idol in human form or picture or on any holy object the mind chooses and finds easy to dwell upon. Sincerity, necessary conception about God and concentration of course are the basic necessities. There is nothing high or low, barbarous or civilised, effective or non-effective in worship. All kinds of true worship lead to the same goal. Rather God knows the mind of the true devotee and *lifts him* up to Himself by whatever path he comes. People who decry idol worship are really ignorant though they may profess to be learned. Greatest saints like Ramakrishna Paramahamsa pursued this method of devotion and were established in the highest truths. Sri Adi Śankara himself composed devotional songs on several deities.

If man has earnestness and devotion in his worship he ultimately comes to the truth, to Reality, to Brahman.

NOTES AND COMMENTS

IN THIS ISSUE

Swami Siddhinathananda is of the Ramakrishna Order and has written to the *Vedanta Kesari* previously also.

Dr (Mrs) Maria Burgi, D.Phil., of Switzerland came as a delegate to Women's Cultural Conference and Parliament of Religions held in Calcutta in connection with the Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda. She participated in the Centenary Celebrations at Madras also. Her article 'Science and Vivekananda' forms a substantial part of her paper read out at one of the conferences at Madras.

Sri R. Ramakrishnan is Headmaster, R.C. High School, Nachandupatti, Thiruchi District.

Sri R. C. S. Sarkar is Secretary, Ministry of Law, Government of India, New Delhi. His article 'Swami Vivekananda the World Citizen', is the text of his speech delivered on the occasion of the birth centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda at the Ramakrishna Mission, New Delhi, on February 12, 1964.

Sri T. S. Devadoss, is a Research Fellow in the Department of Philosophy, University of Madras.

Sri Kamakshidasa R. Somasundaram Aiyar is an Advocate of Madras.

END OF THE YEAR

With this issue the *Vedanta Kesari* completes its fiftieth year of service. We thank all our subscribers, contributors and advertisers for their continued co-operation. It is our earnest request that readers who feel that they have been benefited by reading the journal would suggest to their friends, who will be interested, to enrol themselves as subscribers and help the journal to continue its service to a wider public.

Our next number which is the Golden Jubilee Number will be four times the normal issue, and as such it may be ready only in the third week of May. Every effort, however, will be made to minimize the delay, but we request our subscribers to please bear with us. The first page serial 'Pancadaśī' will be continued during the next year also.

A CONSCIENTIOUS MAN

March 8, of this year saw a tragic happening at Baudpur Railway station, 90 miles from Cuttack, when the Madras-Howrah Express collided headlong, with a stationary goods train at 11-30 p.m. and killed 22 persons and seriously injured 34. It is reported that the impact led the bogie next to the engine to telescope into the engine tender. The driver and two firemen of the goods train were killed on the spot.

The train, it is said, was to pass through Baudpur without stoppage on the first line as the goods train was on the second line. Instead the express came on the second and collided head on with the goods train. There may be accidents which cannot be avoided but some like these are most unfortunate. More so as they happen in front of a station. Tragic as the occurrence is, there emerges an example of steadfastness and devotion to duty on the part of the driver of the Express train. But for his gallant effort and heroic act we shudder to think how many more lives would have been lost, and how colossal would have been the loss and damage, great as it is at present. The report reads pathetic: 'The charred remains of driver P. Crizzle of the Express train depicted his short but grim battle to reduce the impact of the collision.' 'The driver seemed to have sensed trouble as he approached the home signal and immediately his hand went up to the vacuum brake and did not leave it at all. The head and part of the body of the driver recovered from the wreckage prove his efforts to minimise the impact of the accident,' adds the report. It continues, 'Simultaneously with the attempt to slow down the train within those few seconds — it must be less than half a minute as the distance from the home signal to the engine of the goods train was only about one furlong by then — the driver called on his two firemen to jump out and pushed them. The two firemen were saved with injuries.' *

Indeed it is a commendable act — to face certain death in fulfilment of duty. Oh! if everyone could do his duty conscientiously what a change it would have wrought in the affairs of the country! Yet, all need not sacrifice their lives, for all occupations are not so hazardous. Besides, every duty rightly and diligently performed takes one nearer to God, says Sri Krishna — *svakarmaṇā tamabhyarcya siddhim vindati manavaḥ.* Would to God that all were as conscientious.

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* *The Hindu*, Wednesday, March 11, 1964.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES

IMMORTAL WORDS (AN ANTHOLOGY): Pub.: Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan, Bombay-7. Pp. 255 Price Rs. 2.50.

This is an ennobling book, containing choice selections from the writings and utterances of leaders of men in different walks of life all over the world, down the ages. The volume covers a wide variety of topics, viz. Culture, God, Knowledge, Work, Love, Spiritualism, etc. There are pithy sayings, there are tender poems, there are also touching stories as for instance the following one by Sri Ramakrishna:

> A monk in a Hindu village one day saw a wealthy man beating a poor man. On the monk's entreating him to stop beating, the rich man started beating the monk till he fell unconscious. The monk was thereupon taken to a nearby monastery and treated back to consciousness. As milk was being put in his mouth, one of the attendants asked him: 'Maharaj, do you recognise him who is feeding you with milk?' The holy man answered in a feeble voice: 'Brother, he who beat me is now feeding me.' (p. 18)

M. P. PANDIT.

POET-PHILOSOPHERS OF THE RIG VEDA: By Dr C. Kunhan Raja. Pub.: Ganesh & Co., Madras-17. Pp. 330. Price Rs. 20.00.

Dr Kunhan Raja's approach to the Veda steers clear both of the interested prejudices of Western scholarship and the unthinking adulation of the indigenous Vedist. Dr Raja regards the Rig Veda as a record of the last stages of an epoch, highly civilized, highly enlightened, in which we meet Religion, Philosophy, Art and Ritual of a profound kind. He does not subscribe to the commonly held theories of Aryan invasion or of the priority of the Avesta in relation to the Rig Veda. Neither is it true, he points out, to say that the first and the tenth Mandalas are later additions to the Samhita bringing a philosophical element to what is otherwise a one-piece collection of ritualist hymnology. Throughout the Samhita, the author writes, there are hymns which testify to the high level of intuitive perceptions and intellectual formulations that characterized the utterances of those ancient founders of the Indian Civilization, the Rishis.

In illustration of his standpoint, he selects some of the notable figures: 'A Sunahsepa with his devotion to and faith in God, a Dirghatamas conscious of the great change that came over him when he saw the illumination of wisdom and when he thereby acquired the talents of a true poet. We see Yama having found out the Path and the Angirasas who were associated with Indra in the recovery of light. We see Manu who established the system of rituals that regulate man's life.' He takes up the hymns of these Seers as also of some others like Yayati, Mandhata, Kutsa, Kanva, etc. and examines the content of their utterances, the background they imply and the direction they give to the evolution of the national thought.

It may not be possible for all to agree with the author's explanations of some of the key-terms that keep on recurring in the Riks. His explanations of the 'Father' and 'Mother' to whom Sunahsepa craves to be restored (p. 10) as Wisdom and Poetry, of the Cow of Dirghatamas (p. 19) as Language, the Seven Poets or Seven Rishis who appear again and again as seven umpires who sit in the assembly of the wise to test every new-comer aspiring for the title of a poet, do not convince. The treatment of the Sunahsepa legend leaves much to be desired. All the same there is good data that is presented in these pages and considerable ground cleared of weeds.

The chapter on the formation of the world is the best in the treatise. Discussing the hymns bearing on Creation, the writer points out how the seeds of Sankhya system are there in the Nasadiya Sukta, the Vedanta system in the Purusha Sukta and the Nyaya-Vaisesika in the hymns of Hiranyagarbha. Well-documented and closely reasoned, the exposition of the subject is satisfying.

There is finally a brief chapter on *Samvanana* in which the author draws attention to the tendency for integration in the outlook of the Vedic Rishis.

The Appendix containing the text and translations of the hymns dealt with in the main body of the book, and the Notes add to the value of this finely got-up publication. The book focuses interest on the community of the Rishis of the Veda and links up their contribution with the subsequent thought-development in India.

M. P. PANDIT.

INTRODUCTION TO COMPARATIVE PHILOSOPHY: By P. T. Raju. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln. U.S.A. Pp. IX + 364. Price $ 7.50.

Dr P. T. Raju is known to students of Philosophy as one who has made important contributions to comparative philosophy, and the "Concept of Man", published a few years back, edited by him is a testimony to the great interest which Dr Raju has in this branch of philosophy. In the book under review, Dr Raju discusses the Western, the Chinese and the Indian philosophies with particular reference to the universal needs of mankind. He gives a rapid survey, in the first chapter, of Western philosophy beginning with Greek thought and ending with the modern trends. The second chapter deals with Chinese philosophy and the third with Indian philosophy. The last chapter is the most interesting in which the author compares and evaluates the three philosophical traditions. To each of the first three chapters, he has appended a very useful "summary of general characteristics", in which he pinpoints the most significant aspects of the system under investigation. He regards that man's being is of two directions, inward and outward and is of the view that European philosophy emphasises the outwardness of man's being. It cannot be regarded as being throughout rational, scientific, ethical, humanistic or mystical. He has given a comprehensive account of the Chinese philosophy and has brought it up-to-date. Why the Chinese were not interested in ultimate questions and did not develop the notion of a Self or atman, the author clearly explains. Neither were they interested in nature. The immediate life of man was all that mattered to them and to a very great extent Confucius was responsible for this tendency. The author, in common with some other thinkers, characterises Vedic thought as a development from polytheistic outwardness to monistic inwardness. In connection with his criticism of Schweitzer, he stresses the importance of Karma marga or the way of action as taught by some of the Vedic writers.

Dr Raju's discussion of what Indian philosophy needs is very important and timely. He says that India wants a revival of its elemental activism of the early Vedas and the Mimamsa, a reinterpretation and reconciliation of the Mimamsa and the Vedanta. Every one will be in hearty agreement with this statement of the author. The overdeveloped emphasis on Jnana and with it the contempt of Mimamsa, by the later Advaitins, need a healthy corrective and Mimamsa and Vedanta should be made to supplement each other. It is not necessary that we should still be respecting the boundary lines among the various systems. That philosophy can only be always associated with life and that man must be made the common denominator, are statements acceptable to every one.

In the middle of the fourth chapter which is purported to discuss comparisons and reflections, it does not seem necessary to discuss the point of view of comparative philosophy, its aims and approaches. These could well have been relegated to the introduction.

The book is beautifully got up and must find a place in every philosophical library.

S. Rajagopala Sastri.

THE TEXTS OF TAOISM: Translated by James Legge (Parts I & II) Dover Publication, New York. Price 2 Dollars each.

Originally issued in the *Sacred Books of the East* series in the last decade of the 19th century, these volumes contain English renderings by Prof. James Legge of the complete works of the Taoist philosopher Chuang Tzu, the texts of Tao Te Ching and several other important texts necessary for an adequate understanding of the TAO. In the course of his learned and critical introduction, the translator discusses what is Tao and writes:

> 'Tao appears as the spontaneously operating cause of all movement in the phenomena of the universe.. (It is) is not a positive being, but a mode of being....Tao is the extreme to which things conduct us. Neither speech nor silence is sufficient to convey the notion of it.'

He writes interestingly and points out how the Tao is older than Laotze who is regarded commonly as its founder, even as what is known as Confucianism was there long before Confucius. The practical bearings of the Tao on individual progress, the modifications it went through on the advent of Buddhism in China are some of the points touched upon by Mr. Legge.

The texts are not easy to follow. But the notes of the editor-translator help us a good deal.

M. P. Pandit.

PRACTICAL METAPHYSICS OF ZOROASTRIANISM: By Minocheher Hormasji Toot. (Second Edition). Published by Mr. R. S. Dhondy, 4, Sleator Road, Bombay-7. Pages 117 + xxxi. Price not stated.

This nicely got up little book reveals an illuminating study of the World's best and ancient religious and ethical discipline of Master Atharva Ratu Zoroaster who abhorred, much earlier than Plato, the superstitious ritualism and evil (Anghro). Students making a comparative study of theology, philosophy and metaphysics, would find in this book enough material worth the probe.

While presenting Zoroastrianism, the author has successfully brought to bear on the minds of the readers the revealing similarity and resembling syntax between the Vedas and the Zend Avesta. There seems to be undoubtedly a common background, a common religion and a common language, above all a common ancient theological and cultural heritage amongst the Indo-Iranians of the Vedic Times. It is suggestive to think that Zoroastrians were opposed to the Indracult and consequently the twin cultures of Indo-Iranians should have seen a split and a divergence.

Zoroaster is called the Atharva, to mean, one that belonged to a principal priestly order of the ancient Aryans who were supposed to be the custodians of the Holy Sacrificial Fire. He desired people to follow up the Good (Asha) and fight out the Evil (druj). Then only the kingdom of God (Khshthremcha Ahurai) would descend on Earth. The worshippers tie the Kusti (Sacred Girdle) over Sudre (White Sacred Shirt), the symbols of Zoroastrianism, to assert their faith in the Law of Self-Realization. This is indicative of subtlety of the soul and purity of Conscience. Mr. Toot has indeed indicated to us the direction where lies the secret treasure akin to Vedic Culture.

T. S. Raghavan.

SANSKRIT

SRI RAMAKRISHNAKARNAMRITA: By Ottoor Subrahmanyan Nambudiripad; Pub. by Ottoor Unni Nambudiripad, 'Thulasivanam', Mayannur P.O., Kerala State. Price Rs. 1.25.

Pervaded by a spirit of deep devotion, this lyric is cast in the style of Sri Krishnakarnamrita of Lilashuka and is equally appealing. It consists of 280 verses divided into ten cantos and celebrates the glory of Sri Ramakrishna.

In invoking the Grace of this God-man, the author portrays the path of Sadhana which is open to every man who cares to uplift himself, remarking: 'even after obtaining human birth in this land of Bharat, if you fail to acquire merit by renunciation, austerity, service to the Guru, then you are truly unfortunate; you breathe fruitlessly like the bellow.' (Verse 102).

The language is simple and yields the sense at the first reading itself. The variety of metres employed adds to the charm of this little book.

M. P. PANDIT.

FRENCH

QUELQUES ASPECTS D'UNE SADHANA: Par Ma Suryananda Lakshmi, Editions Albin Michel, 22 Rue Huyghens, Paris 13, 11 F.

In this book, her second one, Suryananda Lakshmi gives a detailed portrayal of the major Deities of the Indian Pantheon and the part they play in the evolution of the universe and in the spiritual transformation of the individual. The Divine Mother in her several aspects, e.g. transcendental, cosmic, individual; Vishnu and his avatars in the form of Rama and Krishna; Narada, Hanuman — are all described in vivid particulars regarding their nature and their function. The author draws inspiration from the writings of Sri Aurobindo and her faith in the ultimate destiny of man and the universe draws from the Vision and Work of this Seer-Yogin.

The poetic-prose of the work is in keeping with the quality of the thought and the meditations are truly powerful.

M. P. PANDIT.

NEWS AND REPORTS

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA BIRTH CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

IN FRANCE

A meeting, organized under the auspices of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, Gretz (Seine et Marne) France, was held on February 8, 1964 at 5 p.m. at one of the largest amphitheatres of the Paris University and was presided over by Mr Daniel Levy.

The meeting commenced with Vedic prayer by Swami Ananyananda. A Professor of the University acting on behalf of the Rector alluded to the University's interest in Swami Vivekananda. Swami Ritajananda, Head of the Ramakrishna Vedandta Centre, Gretz, France, then read a message from Srimat Swami Madhavanandaji Maharaj, President, Sri Ramakrishna Math and Mission, Belur Math. Mr Jazarin, Secretary of the Ramakrishna Vedanta Centre, Gretz translated it into French. He also spoke on Swamiji's life.

Prof. Olivier Lacombe, a great Indologist, spoke on Swamiji's thought and philosophy and hailed him as the first teacher who gave the message of the Upanishads to the West in simple and forceful language.

Swami Ritajananda, then spoke in French on the message of Vedanta as given forth by Swami Vivekananda. Mr. Jean Charron, Physicist, who spoke next said that the ancient ideas of the Hindus as reinterpreted by Swamiji were being more and more realized by scientists and mathematicians of today. As an instance he referred to Einstein's theory of relativity which he said was already enlarged upon by Swamiji 30 years before the former's book came in print. The meeting ended with a Sanskrit invocation.

AT T'NAGAR, MADRAS

Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary Celebrations, T'Nagar, Madras began with Puja and Homa by Swami Suddhasatwananda in the Ramakrishna Mission Sarada Vidyalaya Girls' High School, T'Nagar, on 9-2-1964. At noon, nearly a thousand poor people were fed at the premises of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission Boys' High School.

In the evening, scenes from the Parliament of Religions, Chicago were enacted by the students of the Sri Ramakrishna Mission High School. Then followed the public meeting at 4-15 p.m. in the premises of Sri Sarada Vidyalaya Girls' High School under the presidentship of Swami Ranganathananda. Sri C. Rajagopalachari, Swami Suddhasatwananda, Swami Bodhatmananda, Swami Nandananda and Sri M. M. Ismail addressed the large gathering. Swami Ranganathananda unveiled a bust of Swami Vivekananda on the occasion.

A grand procession with a portrait (Chicago Posture) of Swami Vivekananda in a very tastefully decorated and illuminated carriage and led by a caparisoned elephant was taken out in the streets of T'Nagar. There were band, Nadaswaram, dummy-horse and bhajan parties in the procession.

AT TIRUNELVELI

The final celebrations of Swamiji's centenary were held at Tirunelveli on 18-2-1964 at 6 p.m. at Nellai Sangeetha Sabha. The function commenced with Bhajan by Messrs. Balasubramania Bhagawathar and party. Mr V. Balakrishnan, B.Sc. (Lond.) presided over the meeting. Sri T. M. Bhaskara Thondaman, M.A., I.A.S., Retired Collector, Tirunelveli gave a discourse on the Life and Teachings of Swamiji. After a vote of thanks proposed by Mr. S. Ratnam, there was a film-show on the life of the Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi with running commentary in Tamil by Swami Sarvajnananda.

AT TUTICORIN

The Celebration started at 6 p.m. at Subbiah Vidyalayam Girls' High School with Bhajan on 19-2-1964. A public meeting was held at about 6-45 p.m. Sri A. Srinivasa Raghavan, M.A., Principal V. O. C. College Tuticorin, gave a talk on Swamiji and distributed the Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda in English to all High Schools and Colleges in Tuticorin. The books were presented by the local Sub-Committee Secretary Sri S. K. S. Rajamani Nadar. There was a film-show on the life of Sri Sarada Devi with Tamil commentary by Swami Sarvajnananda.

AT ALWARKURUCHY

The Centenary Celebrations at Sri Paramakalyani High School, Alwarkuruchy was presided over by the Correspondent of the High School Sri N. Sankaranarayana Iyer on 20-2-1964 at 4-30 p.m. After prayer by students Srimat Swami Sarvajnananda gave an inspiring talk on Swamiji. He also arranged a film-show on the life of Sri Ramakrishna with Tamil commentary.

AT PERUMALPURAM

Sri Sarada Devi Mathar Sangham, Perumalpuram, celebrated the Centenary along with their 5th Anniversary at 6 p.m. on 21-2-1964 at the Ladies' Club. After Bhajan by the members and prayer, the meeting commenced. Kumari P. R. Uma Maheswari, M.A., of Sara Tucker College presided. The Secretary Mrs. Ratnam read the annual report. Tamil Vidwan Peru Lalitha Bai of Sri Kanthimathi Ambal Girls' High School spoke on Swami Vivekananda. Here also a film-show on Holy Mother was arranged by Swami Sarvajnananda.

AT SRIVILLIPUTHUR

(RAMANATHAPURAM DIST.)

The Pennington Library, Srivilliputtur, celebrated the Swami Vivekananda Centenary on November 2 and 3, 1963. Swami Suddhasatwananda of Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras delivered three inspiring lectures in the Library Auditorium, on 'Swami Vivekananda, the Patroit Saint of India', 'The Message of the Bhagavad Gita' and 'Sri Ramakrishna—the New Prophet'. The speeches were translated into Tamil by Mr Santhanam Iyengar.

A full length film on the Life of Holy Mother, Sarada Devi was shown to a packed house with a running commentary in Tamil by Swami Sarvajnananda. Sri R. V. Ramasundaram Pillai, Pannayar of Rajapalayam welcomed the guest and Sri R. Chandran Pillai, Advocate proposed the vote of thanks.

AT NARSAPUR

In order to celebrate the birth centenary in a fitting manner at Narsapur, West Godavari Dist., Andhra Pradesh, an influential committee was formed with Dr Subramaniyam as the President and Sri Vasudeva Rao, Advocate as the Chairman. At their request Swamis Suddhasatwananda, Yatirajananda and Atmananda went there on the 7th March from Sri Ramakrishna Math, Madras. The celebration commenced on Sunday the 8th March with Vedic chanting in the morning. Special Puja and Homa were performed at the Narsapur College Auditorium by Swami Suddhasatwananda in the morning. At 4 p.m. a colourful procession with a big decorated oil painting of Swami Vivekananda went round the main streets of the Town and terminated at the Narsapur College which was the venue of the celebration. It was followed by a public meeting presided over by Dr Subramaniyam, Ex-Municipal Chairman, Dr Ramarao, Principal, Chirala College, Sri Madhavaraya Sharma, Head of the Telugu Department in A. C. College, Guntur and Swami Suddhasatwananda spoke at length on the life and teachings of the great patriot saint. More than five hundred persons including all the elite of the town heard the learned speeches with rapt attention. The celebration created much enthusiasm and interest in the town and the organisers resolved to start a Samiti in the name of Swamiji. People came from long distances to attend the celebration.

AT MALLIANKARANAI & UTTIRAMERUR

To enable people in the distant villages to attend the centenary celebrations of Swami Vivekananda, the Madras Centenary Committee arranged celebrations at Malliankaranai, a small village 52 miles from Madras and at Uttiramerur, four miles from Malliankaranai.

The authorities of the Ramakrishna Mission Harijan School with the help of the local villagers tastefully decorated a Pandal and received the Swamis and other distinguished invitees with *Purnakumbha*, Nadaswaram and Vedic Chanting.

Poor children numbering about 150 were given oil bath on their arrival at the village. New clothes also were distributed among them. Swami Priyananda performed Puja which was followed by prayer and Bhajana. In the noon about 700 poor people, the invitees and the volunteers were sumptuously fed. At 3 p.m. Sri Ramaswamy Bhagawatar performed Harikatha on the early life of Swami Vivekananda. At a public meeting in the afternoon, the chairman Swami Suddhasatwananda declared open the Vivekananda Centenary Building, which will accommodate the Harijan boys reading in the Ramakrishna Mission Higher Elementary School there. Sri Anna, Krishna Rao, Annaswamy Mudaliar, and Superintendent Borstal Jail, Chingleput addressed the gathering. The Chairman in his concluding speech urged the villagers to read about Swami Vivekananda and co-operate with the authorities in the smooth running of the school and help in imparting man-making education, as envisaged by Swami Vivekananda, to their children.

In the evening all went to Uttiramerur where a big and colourful procession went round the village with a decorated portrait of Swami Vivekananda followed by Bhajana and Nadaswaram. A big meeting was arranged at the Bus stand. More than 600 people attended the meeting which was presided over by Swami Suddhasatwananda. Sri Reddiar, Sri T. S. Krishna Rao, Sri Annaswamy Mudaliar, and Swami Sarvajnananda addressed the gathering and explained to them the life and message of Swami Vivekananda. The President distributed sarees and dhoties to about 100 poor people and told them how Swami Vivekananda felt for the poor and the downtrodden. Sri Anna translated his speech into Tamil. Great enthusiasm was noticed in both the places and there was pressing demand to have the celebration every year. Foodstuff, cooking vessels, clothings etc. were all taken from Madras in a lorry, kindly lent by the Premier Transport, free of charges.

ANNAMALAI UNIVERSITY

Swami Vivekananda Birth Centenary was celebrated at the Annamalai University under the Chairmanship of Dr C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar, the Vice-Chancellor. Swami Suddhasatwananda, Secretary, Vivekananda Centenary Committee, Madras was the chief speaker. Dr C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar while welcoming the chief speaker, dwelt at length on the humanitarian activities of the Ramakrishna Math and Mission in different parts of India and abroad. He said that from his personal experience he could say that the Mission was the only Institution which had been doing real service in the fields of spirituality, social service, spread of ideal education etc. and helping all irrespective of any distinction of caste, creed or colour.

Swami Suddhasatwananda in his address laid stress on Swami Vivekananda's man-making education and his ideal of selfless service to humanity. He exhorted the audience to study the works of Swami Vivekananda thoroughly which would surely inspire them to do selfless service and to lead an ideal life. He said, 'Swami Vivekananda was a bridge between the East and the West. Swamiji laid down his life to improve the conditions of the masses of India and raise the prestige of India high among the peoples of the West.' He appealed to the audience to respond to the clarion call of Swami Vivekananda and to do some service to and sacrifice for the people of India. The Heads of most of the departments, lecturers and other staff of the University and some students attended the function. The Head of the Department of Philosophy proposed a vote of thanks.

AT CHITTOOR

Sri Ramakrishna Ashrama, Chittoor celebrated Birth Centenary of Swami Vivekananda for three days from February 28 to March 1, beginning with Puja in the Ashrama. Sri T. S. Ramaswamy Bhagavathar of Madras and his party performed 'Harikatha Kalakshepam' on two days on the lives of Sri Ramakrishna and Swami Vivekananda. On 29-2-1963, a procession, with Vivekananda's photo was taken round the town accompanied by music and bhajan and a large number of students, teachers and the public. About 200 Daridranarayana's were fed in the noon. The celebrations concluded on 1-3-1964 with enlightened speeches by several scholars at a meeting presided over by Dr K. C. Varadachary of Tirupathi.

AT CHERRAPUNJI (ASSAM)

A newly-built hall named 'Vivekananda Centenary Memorial Hall' was opened on the occasion of the celebration of the birth centenary of Swami Vivekananda at Cherrapunji on the 13th December. Exhibitions depicting the life and teachings of Swamiji and displaying the works of rural developmental activities in the tribal areas were inaugurated on the occasion. Dr Hem Chandra Wahllong spoke on Swamiji's message. Swami Bhavyananda of the Ramakrishna Mission, Shillong presided. The meeting was addressed also by Prof. Kapila Chatterjee, Mr D. C. Roy, Mrs Symleih and Mr H. C. Datta. The pupils of the Ramakrishna Mission School, Cherrapunji, presented songs and recitations befitting the occasion. After the termination of the meeting, all present were treated to refreshments. At night, a film entitled 'Rani Rasmani' was shown and was witnessed by thousands of Khasi people.

Functions of the following day commenced with a parade of the School N.C.C. Troops and sports, followed by a prize giving ceremony at the 'Vivekananda Memorial Hall'. Sri D. N. Datta welcomed the gathering. Miss Margaret Barr, Missionary of the Khasi Hills Unitarian Church said that all the troubles that were being faced by India as well as the other countries of the world, could be conquered if the path shown by Swami Vivekananda was followed by men. Sri D. I. Swer (Sardar of Mawkdak) observed that the people of the interior villages in the Khasi Hills were now realising the importance and utility of the Ramakrishna Mission. Sri Kynpham Sawin of Shillong said that the ideals of the Ramakrishna Mission as propounded by Swami Vivekananda were self-sacrifice and self-realisation and the building up of character without which man cannot attain peace and prosperity. Swami Bhavyananda referred to Swami Vivekananda's visit to Shillong. Dr Hem Chandra Wahllong who presided over the functions gave away the prizes to the pupils. The meeting came to a close with the singing in chorus of the National Anthem. After light refreshments served to all present, the students of the Ramakrishna Mission School staged an incident of Swamiji's life (as Naren) with Sri Ramakrishna dramatised by Sri Subhrendu Bhattacharya for the occasion. The boys and girls of the school presented music and dances along with the dramatic performance.

Earlier in the month, centenary celebrations were held at Shella and Sohbarpunji villages where the functions included puja, bhajan, readings from Swamiji's life and teachings, exhibition, community feasts, yatra performances and public meetings which were addressed by Swamis Saumyananda, Bhavyananda, Hridayananda, Shri Rabindra Nath Baruah, Debesh Mohan Roy, Chaitanya Roy and others on the message of Vivekananda and brotherhood of man.

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